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AUTHOR	Timpane, Michael; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A study team was commissioned to critically review three independent reports on youth and schooling: "Youth: Transition to Adulthood"; "The Education of Adolescents"; and "The Reform of Secondary Education." The study team examined the reports in light of the most recent available social science evidence. The three reports, presenting similar analyses of the status of American youth and the institutions serving them at the end of the 1960s, proposed a direction for reform: (1) dispersion of youth from schools to work place and community; (2) individualization and diversification of high school programs; (3) curricular reforms; and (4) new methods of school governance. This report is arranged into five major sections. The first three sections contain parallel and detailed analyses of the reports. Section I reviews the reports. Section II deals with some constraints of the adolescent life stage depicted by the reports, such as age segregation, prolongation of adolescence, and peer group development. Section III focuses on school youth's encounters with the labor market and Section IV covers findings and proposals that concern the organization and performance of high schools. Each chapter also spells out major considerations that the reports slight or omit. Section V attempts to define policy steps that seem feasible and sensible based on the review and events that have occurred since the three reports were written. The study team suggests that some findings of the three reports were overdrawn, the findings rest on a weak research base, and some proposed reforms may be less necessary or feasible than stated or would have effects other than those intended. (Author/ND)

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YOUTH POLICY IN TRANSITION

PREPARED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

MICHAEL TIMPANE
SUSAN ABRAMOWITZ
SUE BERRYMAN BOBROW
ANTHONY PASCAL

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PREFACE

This Rand report is based on the final product of a study commissioned by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, under its Basic Ordering Agreement for policy analyses. It was performed as part of The Rand Corporation's Education and Human Resources Program, directed by John Pincus. It is intended for the use of federal educational policy-makers, and of officials and analysts who are involved in secondary education at any level of school government or in any branch of the education profession.

SUMMARY

The study presented in this report was commissioned by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in response to the publication of three independent reports on youth and schooling: *Youth: Transition to Adulthood* by the President's Science Advisory Committee (James Coleman, Chairman); *The Education of Adolescents* by the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (John Henry Martin, Chairman); and *The Reform of Secondary Education* (B. Frank Brown, Chairman). The intent of the study is to examine the reports together, in the light of the most recent available social science evidence, and to suggest their policy implications.

These reports were three prominent attempts to assess the status of American youth and the institutions serving them, in the aftermath of the turbulent 1960s--a time when political events, such as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam war, aroused young people, sometimes threatened them; during this period, young people emerged as a powerful new political force. They were enrolling in colleges at higher and higher rates. During a decade of rapid economic growth, jobs for college graduates and part-time jobs for students were plentiful--but the unemployment rates for youths with high school diplomas or less, and especially for black youths, were far higher than the general rate of unemployment. Finally, the 1960s was a time when the distinctive youth culture became more visible and probably more influential on growing numbers of young people and on society. The important role of young persons in urban riots and in anti-war protests was astonishing and frightening to many adults.

The three reports examined herein present similar analyses of the status of youth at the close of the sixties. Characterizing youth as a "transitional period," they attempt to relate youth development and schooling to adult attributes (e.g., patterns of employment and income). In the attempt to explain how young people have arrived at

their present place in our society, they put forth several major historical-cultural developments:

- An increasing age segregation in our society that has cut off youth from adults, especially in productive activities, and even from one another, in extended, narrowly age-graded schooling.
- An earlier biological development of youth, more complex patterns of psychosocial development, and earlier exposure to the world through mass media--changes that society and schools have not acknowledged adequately.
- A lengthening delay between the time when young persons are ready to assume some adult roles, and the time when society allows them to do so.

Thus, increasingly isolated and consigned to a stretch of useless years, the reports say, young people have clustered more and more in their own peer groups and become more alienated from the rest of society. The apathy, hostility, and occasional violence that bespeak their alienation complicate and frustrate the task of the institutions serving them. This has been especially so for the high schools, which the reports see as mass bureaucratized institutions, struggling with little success to fill a wide spectrum of new social roles, but continuing to value and emphasize traditional forms of academic learning.

To correct the situation as perceived, the reports propose thoroughgoing reform of secondary education, involving

- *Dispersion*--reversal of the trend toward concentrating youth in segregated educational environments, putting them instead, for a good part of the time, in the workplace or other community activities.
- *Individualization and flexibility*--arrangement of institutions so that individuals and groups of individuals combine their conventional schooling and their dispersed educational activities effectively.
- *Modernization of curricula*--new educational programs to enable students to function better as adult citizens of the nation and the world, and to better understand both media and aesthetics.

- *Changes in school governance*--enhanced participation by community, staff, and students in educational goal-setting and program development at every high school.

Taken together, these findings and recommendations represent an unprecedentedly broad evaluation of educational and social policy toward youth and high schools. In developing their descriptions and prescriptions, however, the reports reach many conclusions that run beyond their evidence. They dwell little upon considerations of cost and feasibility, and hardly at all upon the problems or possibilities of institutions other than the high school. Neither do they inquire into the problems of deviant behavior among youth--such as acts of rejection and criminality--which persist and grow.

The reports' most serious limitation is their unitary view of youth, schools, and society. Mainly, they address the problems of white, middle-class male youths, who account for about 25 percent of all young people. Reforms developed in this perspective, but applied to all youth, could produce greater equity *or* serious new inequities in the distribution of the benefits of education to different subgroups of youth, such as blacks, females, or the economically disadvantaged.

DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

The reports' many statements about the nature of adolescence and adolescents produce an implicit model of the important characteristics, processes, and consequences of that life stage. For example, the reports argue that the recent increase in educational opportunities for young people exacerbates the social segregation of youth and adults and prolongs youth's dependence. They assume that prolonged dependence alienates young people and impairs their abilities to assume adult responsibilities; age segregation increases peer-group influence; and age segregation and peer-group influence together cause greater intergenerational hostilities and an unstable, "disconnected" youth culture.

In discussing these phenomena, the reports often fail to specify their causes: Are they caused by attributes inherent in the adolescent life stage (such as puberty); by long-term secular trends (such as increased occupational options, credentialism, and affluence); or by short-term historical fluctuations (such as wars, recessions, and changes in cohort size)? Understanding the respective contributions of these causes to the events of the 1960s will be essential in estimating what can be expected to remain, appear, or disappear as a problem for youth and adults in the future.

This Rand study raises questions concerning several central premises of the earlier reports. We find that, in some ways, young people enter the adult world earlier than the reports suggest--despite the fact that many youths probably need later entry now to understand their choices of opportunities and to prepare for them. For youth from low-income families, in particular, the problem may often be *too little* delay before assuming adult responsibilities and, thus, premature foreclosure of options. We are also unable to find evidence that young people in recent years are impaired in their ability to assume responsibilities when they become adults.

Age segregation is almost certainly greater today than in the nineteenth century in terms of day-to-day contact among age groups in the home and workplace. However, more youth have living parents and grandparents today, and adult values, choices, and solutions are presented to them in many new ways (e.g., by television). We do not know the net effect of these trends on the quality of relationships among age groups. While greater peer influence can lead youths with poor family relationships into further difficulty, peer relationships for most adolescents seem instrumental to personal growth. The existence of an unstable, "disconnected" youth culture is difficult to document if values, rather than manners and taste, are used as the criteria. Certainly, fears of a nation separated by age into culturally alien groups do not seem well founded.

Understandably, but wrongly, the reports interpret youthful behavior in the 1960s as trends, rather than as responses to

transient events--especially the Vietnam war. We do not share the reports' implicit sense that youth are a danger. However, we do share their implicit sense of "missed opportunities." It is difficult for people in all age groups to cope with contemporary America. It is reasonable to think that our institutions could be better arranged to help youth make sensible choices from the occupational, marital, educational, and life style alternatives available to them.

YOUTH, SCHOOLS, AND THE LABOR MARKET

A major concern of the reports is that many young people will not become economically productive adults because they are kept in schools too long--isolated from productive work and ultimately discouraged and alienated. We found this concern difficult to document. Even though they are in school longer, young people today participate in the labor market at least as much as they have during the past 20 years, although some may be isolated *within* the labor market, in jobs that do not afford real entry to adult careers. Despite this, there is no evidence that young workers are growing more dissatisfied with their jobs, or that they are less productive than their counterparts in earlier years. The decline in an individual's economic return from education seems more a function of the recession, the size of the youth population, and an oversupply of college-educated youth than of any particular failure of the schools.

Since the reports' authors are concerned about the occupational future of youth, they propose new ways to provide students with an improved career development process during their schooling. However, high schools today already offer many programs intended to ease the transition to work, and these programs have not been conspicuously successful. Vocational education is often ineffective and career education too new to evaluate. Work release programs are often poorly monitored, and school counseling tends to ignore the non-college bound.

Proposed workplace and community education programs--in which students spend a good deal of time and have significant work experience out of school--will depend for their success on several factors:

the availability of good jobs for young people (i.e., meaningful jobs that do not displace adult workers), the ability to match a young person's talents and interests with available jobs, and a rearrangement of custodial responsibilities for youth. Reducing barriers--minimum wage laws, child labor laws, workmen's compensation regulations--to youthful employment in good jobs implies a social commitment of jobs that may not exist. Matching individual talents and interests with career alternatives will require more counselors, with new skills and training, as well as significantly better diagnostic techniques than are currently available. Under the proposed reforms, employers and other community institutions would shoulder some of the custodial responsibilities for youth that the schools currently bear, and both schools and parents may resist the transfer. Finally, work-oriented reforms carry potential equity problems: they can be used to dump difficult-to-teach students out of the school building and onto the general public.

The reports rightly sense that young people are not getting enough useful career information prior to making their career choices and that the organization of our educational system makes it difficult for adults to redirect careers. The reports' proposals for workplace education, lowering job entry barriers, and educational drawing rights should be explored--but initially as experiments. New data on and analysis of the longitudinal history of selected young people will also provide better information about which policies will really improve the transition from school to work for youths with differing abilities and aspirations.

REFORMING THE HIGH SCHOOL

The reports see three changes in youth that high schools must cope with: changes in developmental patterns (especially earlier puberty); changes in the social and ethnic composition of the high school population; and changes in the nature of students' experiences in their families and the media. High schools have failed to cope adequately, the reports say, because they are bureaucratic and relatively isolated from other institutions in society; because a

burgeoning student culture interferes with educational programs; and because high schools, willingly or not, have taken on more than they can handle in the nation's pursuit of equal opportunity through schooling. In consequence, high school life has become standardized and high schools cannot innovate; teachers are authoritarian and schools are too large. Success in the original and still basic academic mission of the high school may soon be engulfed by the social and educational problems related to keeping youth off the labor market and overcoming class and race distinctions.

Our review suggests that each of these conclusions is somewhat overdrawn. High schools are somewhat inflexible, but in the past decade, they have installed significant innovations, such as mini-schools, team teaching, and new science and mathematics curricula. Although teachers are often restrained by departmentalization and subject-matter orientation, they can still act professionally to meet students' classroom needs. Some, but not all, high schools are very large (more than 1000 students). Smaller high schools may provide a more humane style of life and greater opportunity for the involvement of each student, but they may also entail higher costs and increased class- or race-segregation. Some negative influences of the peer group on schooling are well-documented by studies performed mostly in the 1950s and early 1960s, but the significance of that influence weighed against the positive effects of peer groups in providing needed support for the student remains unclear.

The reports recommend dispersion, individualization, and flexibility; curricular reform; and new patterns of governance as reforms in secondary education. They propose alternative places for learning, often in the workplace; reduction of age-segregated assignment practices within high schools; smaller high schools and more flexible school-leaving regulations; and involvement of community and student representatives in high school goal-setting and decisionmaking processes. These proposed reforms are largely sensible, but unaccompanied by evidence of effectiveness. In addition, no consideration is given to their costs or feasibility. Most important and surprising, these proposed reforms do not *directly* confront the major

problems of high school bureaucratization *or* teacher attitudes *or* student peer group behavior, which the reports themselves highlight; their likely relevance to different groups of students or different types of communities is also not explored.

POLICY ANALYSIS

The doubts we have expressed about the evidence and logic in the reports' findings and about the cost and efficacy of many of their recommendations suggests that these recommendations should be viewed with caution. Moreover, since the reports were published, the context for policy-making has changed substantially. The growth in numbers of youth has virtually ended, and a gradual decline in their absolute number will soon begin. High school enrollments will also begin to decline. The past three years have also been years of economic recession, which has aggravated a longer term and probably persistent decline in the economic rewards of extended education. Moreover, with the end of the Vietnam war and a persistent conservative mood in the country, youth protests have greatly diminished and the "generation gap" is fast becoming an archaic formulation in all but a few areas of taste and value.

In secondary education, the most notable changes since the reports were published have been the spread of collective bargaining among teachers, the decline of students' rights movements, and, paradoxically, an increasing focus on disciplinary problems. In other respects, high schools have neither reversed nor accelerated their gradual trend toward diversification through mini-schools, alternative schools, and expanded work-study programs. Despite continuing concern with discipline, racial integration, and drug abuse, the public remains moderately favorable towards many of these trends. Students are eager for more reforms like these; so are secondary educators--up to the point where the reforms begin to create competitors to the high school or otherwise loosen the high school's grip on the process of secondary education.

After reviewing the three reports from several perspectives, in the light of all of the evidence available to us, we support cautious exploration of their recommendations. *Dispersion* programs will help young people make needed contact with the workplace and other community activities, in order to better match their aptitudes and interests against the opportunities and requirements for various adult pursuits. But young people do not need to be dispersed in order to be "defused" or more readily brought under social control. Nor should dispersion schemes be used to hasten the entry of youth into firm career channels. Young persons need considerable time for trial-and-error in their adjustment to our complex and changing society. Finally, dispersion plans should not be used to dump many of the least adequate students into unproductive out-of-school activities.

In improving the experience of youth in the workplace, policymakers will need to consider areas other than the various programs of exploration or training that the reports suggest. Such considerations should concern increasing the quality and quantity of jobs available for youth, and addressing directly the problems of discrimination, job information, poor geographical access to jobs, and discouragement that hamper minority youth.

The reports' proposals for *individualized and flexible secondary education programs* make sense in the light of the reports' evidence on the developmental heterogeneity of youth. However, effective individualization may be unattainable with present diagnostic instruments and procedures, and flexible new programs may be most difficult to create and operate for minority and disadvantaged students who probably need them the most.

With respect to other proposals to increase high school flexibility, we believe *smaller high schools* may create a more human scale of activity for youth, but they may be more costly and less socially or racially integrated. They will probably not produce greater academic achievement. *Performance criteria* for certain measurable skills, a system of *credit for out-of-school educational experience*, and *greater discretion in the timing of high school completion* are

desirable reforms, too--provided, once again, that they do not impede the educational progress of disadvantaged students. A major reform deserving serious consideration, but mentioned only briefly in one of the three reports, is the concept of *educational drawing rights*, wherein from the later years of high school onwards, students would be able to draw upon a given level of resources to pay for further school, out-of-school educational opportunities, subsidized employment, or skill training.

The reports' suggested *reforms in governance* would increase community and student participation in high school goal-setting and program development. Expanded participation at the goal-setting stage will be necessary for local programs in the continued absence of national goal consensus. But expanded participation in day-to-day decisionmaking--especially by students--would encounter staff hostility and, we suspect, widespread student disinterest.

One governance improvement that needs more emphasis than the reports provide is *staff development*: the proposed reforms will depend for their success upon the attitudes and behavior of teachers, in a time when the teaching staff is growing older and increasingly unionized, and turnover is decreasing. Successful staff development programs, of which there are few known examples, will be crucial to the success of the proposed reforms.

In the further implementation of these proposals for reform, each level of school government has a distinct role to play. School districts and local education officials must decide how much dispersed, individualized education their high schools should have and how much new participatory planning is called for. States interested in stimulating the proposed reforms will need to review a wide range of regulations governing accountability for students, credits, staff training, and so forth, to lower or remove barriers to proposed reforms. In doing so, they should note the experience of the few states, such as California, that have already started down this road.

The federal government should consider developing a capacity-building grant program to encourage and support initial local efforts to implement the proposed reforms. It should also find a means to

support the expected staff development requirements that proposed reforms would entail.

The federal government should, finally, sponsor studies to improve the basis for future policies affecting youth and secondary education: studies focusing, for example, on the experiences of non-college-bound youth and upon female youth; studies describing the American high school fully and analyzing the determinants of organizational changes in it; and field experiments for reforms involving either new institutions or generally controversial proposals.

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INTRODUCTION

The study presented in this report was commissioned by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in response to the publication of three independent reports on youth and schooling: *Youth: Transition to Adulthood*, by the President's Science Advisory Committee (James Coleman, Chairman); *The Education of Adolescents*, by the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (John Henry Martin, Chairman); and *The Reform of Secondary Education*, by the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education (B. Frank Brown, Chairman).

The study team was charged with reviewing these three reports critically to assess: the completeness and accuracy of their evidence; their success in identifying important and persistent phenomena in this nation's education and socialization of youth; their judgments about the extent to and manner in which these phenomena have caused unnecessary social, economic, and educational problems; and the likely efficacy of policies they propose to ameliorate these problems. The study team consisted of an educator, a social psychologist, an economist, and an educational policy analyst with experience in federal and local educational policy-making. The method of analysis used by the study team consisted of an explication of the contents of the reports, an extensive review of the literature related to the main points, and, a logical and empirical critique of specific findings and recommendations.

This undertaking has proved to be hazardous. Each of the three reports represents a bundle of theories, beliefs, and evidence--in varying proportions--developed by a distinguished group of knowledgeable, often expert, persons. Commission studies such as these have become, in the United States and in other democratic nations, important parts of the societal reaction to immediate, serious problems. They are intended to be efficient devices to bridge the gaps in knowledge and perception that exist between policy-makers and the

best-informed or -advised segment of the public.* Commission members are chosen for their practical or intellectual expertise, but not necessarily for their objectivity or methodological prowess. They do not always accept uncritically the research evidence presented to them, but rather assess it in the light of their years of prior experience and values, and do not perform new research. These intellectual processes are inherently obscure and are made more so by the political processes by which commissions usually accommodate differing views in building consensus among the members.

Commission reports are thus easy to criticize, but hard to refute. Critics, ourselves included, risk taking "cheap shots" that attack the credibility of the reports without appreciating the fullness of their understanding or, most significantly for policy purposes, without suggesting either alternative or additional interpretations of the situation or policy implications. We have tried to make the value assumptions of the commissions' reports explicit and to show where their lines of argument are or are not compelling. The questions we tried to answer were:

- How complete and accurate are the reports in their presentation of evidence?
- To what extent do the findings of the reports reflect ephemeral contemporary events, and to what extent do they identify fundamental underlying phenomena and trends concerning the social arrangements of youth?
- Do the underlying problems of youth, once described, have important social consequences in the sense that they either affect society adversely in the short term or impair the individual's later capacities to function as an adult?
- To what extent do the important underlying problems, once described, stem from the known physiological

*Speculatively, however, it may be that commissions, precisely because they are usually selected to investigate some recent or ongoing abnormality in social conduct, operate at precisely the time when it is most difficult to sort out structural trends from temporary phenomena.

and psychological realities of adolescence, and to what extent do they stem from youth's interaction with badly arranged social institutions?

- To the extent that problems are inherent in adolescence, how can institutions (e.g., policy) cope with and ameliorate them?
- To the extent that sources of the problem lie in the social institution, how can institutional performance be improved?

For policy-makers especially, we have also tried to assess both the continuing relevance of information and suggestions (already three to four years old) and the feasibility of specific proposed reforms.

We do not feel that we have concluded this task. The commission reports themselves are too complex and ambiguous and the associated educational and social science literature is too extensive for us not to suspect that, with more time and effort, we would come to think differently about some aspects of what the reports say and what society should do. We also recognize that, in evaluation of commission reports, certitude is unattainable. What is necessary, and what we believe is provided here, is a sense of the range and magnitude of further questions that ought to be asked in the continuing assessment and implementation of the reports.

In reviewing these reports, we have chosen to present them *en bloc* as a set of societal responses to the same problems. Undoubtedly, we have thereby sacrificed something in our explanation of the structure and content of each report. Our approach was nevertheless suitable, we believe, because the reports' recommendations overlap substantially, while at the same time presenting a variety of analytic perspectives ranging from broadly social and applied academic concerns (Coleman) to the practical and reflexive problems of high schools (Brown). We try to note differences in recommendations among the reports, when they exist. We also try to suggest the extent to which the three reports arrive at similar recommendations on the basis of widely disparate assessments of the problems of youth. Different assessments will be associated with different expectations about what any one reform will produce.

Finally, we hope that our report will not contribute to a view that youth and adolescence in America is best described as a series of pathological episodes, with the arguments centered on how much worse adolescents are becoming. We would like to emphasize that, in our study, we found the differences between youth and adults to be both less extensive and less significant for the future than the reports suggest--and that, in our lives, we have found among the vast majority of young people (as among adults) much alienation and uncertainty, but little that is pathological.

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I. THE REPORTS IN REVIEW

(Michael Timpane)

At the beginning of the 1960s, the conventional wisdom concerning youth was represented rather well by James B. Conant's *The American High School Today* (Conant, 1959). Even though Conant's studies concentrated on youth in secondary schools, he reflected the common and broader assumption that (delinquents aside) American youth was an abundant and promising resource, to be trained ever more extensively and efficiently by educational institutions, for everyone's social and economic profit. Conant called for greater perfection: for educational quality in a democratic social setting--in an institution he called the comprehensive high school, a large institution offering a panoply of courses and services to youth of every class and bent. There were, as yet, only undercurrents of opinion that youth were troubled or troublesome (Goodman; Friedenberg, 1959; Coleman, 1961).

At the end of the 1960s, little of this confidence remained. After a decade of tumult and disappointment, both young people and the institutions serving them were suspect. The questions on many minds were: What went wrong? Where should we go from here?

Working almost concurrently in 1971 and 1972, three distinguished groups of observers proposed some answers--in the three separate reports on youth and schooling that this study reviews. Chronologically, the first of these efforts was launched by the President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC). It consisted of a review by a committee of social scientists, chaired by James S. Coleman, of available social science and historical evidence concerning the attributes and behavior of youth, and an application of pertinent parts of this evidence to the perceived problems of youth in our society. The committee's 190-page report, *Youth: Transition to Adulthood* (Coleman et al., 1974) appeared in June 1973.

The second effort, begun in early 1972, was that of the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) (Martin et al., 1974). This panel of

social scientists and educators was chaired by John Henry Martin, an educational consultant and former superintendent of schools. In its work, this group covered much of the ground covered by the Coleman report, with a closer focus on the application of the evidence to educational programs. Through commissioned papers, it also investigated several aspects of the curriculum and operation of high schools. Consisting of a free-standing summary report of findings and recommendations, a 200-page review of selected issues, and 25 lengthy background papers, the Martin report is by far the most extensive of the three reports. It was released in late 1973, and a revised version, *The Education of Adolescents*, appeared in 1975.

The final report under consideration here is *Reform of Secondary Education* (Brown et al., 1973), the book-length product of a commission consisting almost wholly of representatives selected from various educational parties-at-interest--students, parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, and legislators. Convened in July 1972 under the auspices of the Kettering Foundation and chaired by educator B. Frank Brown, this commission garnered its data mostly from regional hearings and from surveys of national panels of teachers, parents, students, and administrators. Its report is a series of 35 recommendations, each with a succinct rationale.

These reports, taken together, constitute an unprecedentedly broad reevaluation of educational and social policy toward adolescents and high schools. Since 1973, moreover, the reevaluation has continued. Two conference reports, *The Greening of the High School* (Weinstock) and *American Youth in the Mid-Seventies* (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1972), have appeared; another National Commission (on Resources for Youth) has reported; the National Society for the Study of Education (Havighurst and Dreyer), for the first time in 34 years, devoted its yearbook (1974) to the examination of youth; and an extensive literature critiquing the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports is beginning to emerge (Featherstone; Cawelti, 1974; *School Review*, 1974). Moreover, reexaminations of adolescent education have begun at the state level. Two extensive state reports have also been produced (in California [Report, 1975] and

North Carolina [*Channels for Changing Secondary Schools*, 1974]), and several additional state efforts are getting under way. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the education profession, notably the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), has begun to embrace many key elements of reform. The NASSP's extensive new policy statement, *This We Believe* (NASSP, 1975a), is an explicit response to the thrust of the three reports under review here. So also is the USOE's sponsorship of regional meetings of chief state school officers to consider regional high school reforms and its convening, with NASSP, a national conference on the topic in the spring of 1976. Clearly, the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports helped launch a new phase of the nation's puzzled response to the well-publicized problems of its youth.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE REPORTS

The 1960s were times of enormous stress for youth and the institutions serving them. The reports all list and analyze several dimensions of such stress. At the national political level, two upheavals--the civil rights movement and the Vietnam war--directly affected many youth in school. Desegregation programs and the draft both occasioned, rightly or wrongly, criticisms of authority and active protest on high school and college campuses and city streets.

Beneath the waves of protest, there ran a phenomenal demographic tide. Between 1960 and 1970, the number of persons aged 14 to 24 surged from 26.7 to 40.5 million. The proportion of the population aged 25 to 64 increased from 32 to 45 percent in the same period (Coleman et al., 1974). This was a remarkable, unprecedented, and not soon to be repeated expansion in the absolute and relative size of the youth group in this country.

Educational institutions were hard pressed to house and teach the larger student bodies, especially since the added numbers of secondary school students were located largely in suburban locations with limited existing school capacity. These problems were compounded by the decisions of more students to attend schools at every level. The proportion of students aged 14 to 17 climbed from 90 to 94 percent

(U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975a); the proportion of persons aged 25 to 29 possessing a high school diploma increased from 60 to 75 percent (*Condition of Education*). Proportionately, the largest gains occurred among blacks, where the proportion of persons 25 to 29 having a high school diploma went from fewer than 40 percent to almost 60 percent. College attendance jumped from 3.6 to 8.5 million, from 22 to 32 percent of the population aged 18 to 24 (*Digest*, 1973). This growth is generally attributed to rising levels of aspiration, swift economic growth, and increased employment in teaching and the R&D sector, which raised the demand for workers with college degrees. Part of the expansion is also attributed to an increased number of blacks attending college, brought about by the assistance of new governmental and private aid programs and by the attractiveness of higher education as an alternative to military service. Overall, college graduates increased from 11 to 16 percent of the population aged 25 to 29.

The result of these trends is that, while the cohort group aged 14 to 24 years expanded by 52 percent from 1960 to 1970, the number of students in the cohort group expanded by 82 percent, from 12.9 to 23.5 million persons. Median years of schooling in the entire adult population jumped from 10.5 to 12.2 years (*Condition of Education*).

The experience of young people in the labor markets during the decade was uneven. Many new college graduates quickly landed good jobs, and the availability of part-time jobs for students increased. Yet, throughout the period, unemployment for youths not in school remained at two to three times the general rate of unemployment, and unemployment for black youths was typically twice again as high as that for white youths.

The 1960s also saw a substantial enhancement of the rights of youth. Students in high schools and colleges began to acquire constitutional rights vis-a-vis their administrators. The nation also began the process, completed in 1971, of lowering the voting age to 18 (Coleman, et al., 1974, p. 43). Equally significant, through their protests and political activity, young people became a more potent political interest group.

No list of the "events" occurring in the 1960s would be complete without some reference to the "youth scene" itself. A "youth culture" had been evident in the United States at least since the 1940s, when young people began to emerge as a consumer force (Williams). Many sociologists have noted the rise of the youth peer group as a social force having educational and other consequences (e.g., Coleman, 1961; Friedenberg). In the late 1960s, youths were the victims of the draft, segregation, and, some thought, institutional repression. They provided most of the bodies for mass protests. They seemed to turn even more toward one another and, at least for some, consciously away from adults, and to develop distinctive tastes in appearance and attire, music and media, drug use and life style. Some commentators also saw evidence of a lessening inclination to become traditionally productive adults (*Work in America*). The scope of attitudinal change was wide, and the magnitude of the shift (in percentage of youths holding a given view) was often substantial (Braungart).

These far-reaching, rapid-fire changes in the situation of youth and the institutions serving them are surely sufficient reason for the new questions raised by the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports about our social arrangements for young people. At the same time, the very magnitude of the changes suggests another point: long-range policies should not be made too quickly in response to them, for they have all passed or altered. The Vietnam war and the draft are ended. The civil rights struggle is proceeding at a slower pace for blacks and has refracted to pursue the rights of Hispanics, Indians, and women. Demographic growth of the youth cohort has ended; recent cohorts have been somewhat smaller in number than those of the post-war baby boom, so that there will actually be fewer youths aged 14 to 24 in 1990 than today (Coleman et al., 1974). The era of rapid economic growth has ended, at least temporarily. Rates of college entrance will probably remain the same or decline (*More Than Survival*) since the graduates of the 1960s have so clogged the technical, professional, and managerial slots in our economy that it will be more difficult for the graduates of the 1970s and 1980s to obtain a high return on their investment in schooling (Freeman, 1974a). And, finally, the persistence

and wider relevance of the youth culture seems uncertain. There seems to be substantial diffusion of its once distinct tastes and values into the culture at large. There is a remarkable political quietism setting in among youth. Thus, although the reports are clearly responsive to a distinctive historical period, they were produced just as that period was giving way to another.

THE REPORTS' FINDINGS

The main findings and recommendations of the three reports (as well as of some other reports) have already been listed and described in several publications (University of Georgia; Esty; Cawelti; Passow). Thus, our report of their contents is very brief and extracts only the small number of substantially common themes that unite them. We highlight the specific findings (and omissions) that lead or ought to lead to consideration of changes in public policy.

The most striking common element in the three reports is the regocnition that youth are alienated from important aspects of our society and that their alienation is impeding the performance of institutions serving them. This recognition is a substantial departure from the policy viewpoints of the 1950s. It suggests, for example, that the non-academic objectives of education are important not only in and of themselves, but also because they affect the school's ability to achieve academic objectives. It also suggests that institutions, especially schools, themselves cause alienation. Each report is deeply ambivalent about the significance of the alienation: on the one hand, this alienation makes youth threatening; on the other hand, it represents a lost opportunity for human development and progress.

A second fundamental similarity of the reports is their view of the adolescence as, in Coleman's title phrase, "a transition to adulthood." From this perspective, the reports relate adolescent development and schooling to resultant adult characteristics (e.g., patterns of employment and income, political behavior, and family formation and dissolution). This perspective both broadens the areas for analysis and helps distinguish ultimately important youth behaviors from those that may be merely temporarily unpleasant and inconvenient, or downright insignificant.

The reports differ significantly in their analytical perspectives. The Coleman report, reflecting the academic viewpoint of its membership, constructs a model of adulthood. It sets forth seven traits that picture the successful adult as productive, responsible, focused, tolerant, and cooperative. The primary test of this adulthood seems to be socially productive work within the existing social order. Policy suggestions are intended to alter the broad relationships among institutions in guiding youth to such adulthood.

The Martin report clearly shares the Coleman view that productive work is an important attribute of the successfully grown person. But it also attaches great importance to such attributes as family membership, citizenship, aesthetic appreciation, and the ability to interpret the mass media. In addition, the Martin report is concerned that all these virtues enliven youth itself, as well as defining its adult product. Its proposed policies would improve instruction and administration in schools, as well as parceling out educational responsibilities among institutions.

The Brown report, reflecting the practical bent of its members, simply intends to improve high schools, without attending to larger issues concerning the situation of youth in society. Believing that schools are social instruments that should derive goals from their clientele, the Brown panel created committees of educators, parents, and students and asked them to rate the importance of a dozen proposed goals for high schools.* The panel's 35 recommendations aim directly at the improvement of high schools.

Much of each report is devoted to interpretive historical analysis of the developing status of American youth and the institutions serving them. The reports assert several major historical-cultural trends:

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*The four most popular goals (favored typically by 8 or 9 out of every 10 respondents) concerned basic communication skills, critical thinking, self-knowledge, and responsible citizenship. Further down the list (but still supported by a majority) were such objectives as clarification of values, occupational competence, computational skills, and respect for law and authority.

- *Separation of the different age groups.* Youth are physically separated from other age groups by increased specialization in the workplace, increased period of schooling (in both the number of days per year and the total number of years), and changes in both the age composition and the general social significance of the family. Strict age-grading in schools has further separated young people from one another.

- *Changed developmental patterns of individuals.* The processes of biological maturation have been speeded up, probably by improved nutritional practices. Young people today are larger and more robust, and reach puberty one or two years earlier than previous generations in this century. Cognitively, youth represents a final stage in intellectual development and a time of potentially rapid advances in knowledge and powers of reasoning. Psychosocially in our culture, youth is a time for establishing independence and personal identity. In each of these processes, there are large differences among individuals at any given age. In addition, youth's experiences have changed markedly with the arrival of television and other mass media aimed at youth and with the increased affluence and opportunities for geographical mobility.

- *Prolongation of youth.* For most youth, schooling extends into their late teens or early twenties. Much of the extended schooling is intended to meet the demands of an industrial society. Society has responded by postponing the according of adulthood to young persons. Most youth wait much longer than their parents did to gain economically secure employment. Thus, paradoxically, although youth now develop earlier physiologically and socially, they must endure a longer and longer transition from childhood to adulthood. In this transitional period, youth accumulate skills and expectations but experience enforced dependency and a sense of uselessness. Society seems to be telling its young that they need not hurry to adulthood.

- *Development of youth peer groups.* These trends toward dependency and isolation have caused youth in the past two decades to form strong peer group cultures. Facilitated by the new affluence of youth, these peer groups have become the social group in which youth finds norms for behavior. However, because the peer groups are so cut off from other traditional reference groups in the home or workplace, it is difficult for them to do an adequate job of providing norms.

The impact of these long-term trends has been accentuated, the reports note, by two previously described occurrences of the 1960s: the swift expansion of youth cohorts and the checkered performance of the labor market in providing jobs. Greatly expanded numbers of highly educated young persons have found jobs, but there have not been enough openings or kinds of employment for many young people.

The concomitant history of the high school, the reports say, has been:

- o A progressive transformation of high schools from elite academies to institutions of mass education.
- o The advent during the past 20 years of real universality--more than 95 percent of the young attend high schools for most of the year and more than 75 percent graduate.
- o The absorption of much larger cohorts of students, resulting in swiftly expanding enrollments and a preoccupation with housing and staffing.
- o Incessant pressure from the community and, for different reasons, from the industrial sector* for schools to retain custody of youth.
- o The assumption of new social concerns, a development associated with the increasingly heterogeneous racial and social composition of high school students and the nation's adoption of positive social policies.
- o Failure to provide a truly comprehensive high school education:
  - -- high schools continue to be oriented toward traditional norms of academic achievement,
  - -- vocational development is neither highly regarded nor effectively taught, and
  - -- different racial and social groups have little real contact with one another.
- o Substantial success in the domain of academic development, but several areas in which curriculum reform has lagged.

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*Joseph Kett, writing the Coleman report's history of youth, notes that during the Depression, the labor movement's reasons for supporting compulsory school attendance and child labor laws shifted from child protection to job protection.

- o Bureaucratization of management--uniform authority structures and specialization services (such as counseling and remedial services); age-grading; three-track programs (academic, general, and vocational); standardized requirements for promotion and graduation; etc.
- o A rising incidence of protest and violence, representing a breakdown in the school's ability to control and discipline its students.

This is the perception of youth and schooling that emerges from all three reports. However, the reports draw somewhat different conclusions. The Coleman report, impressed mostly by the bureaucratization of schooling and the dysfunctional aspects of the age segregation and prolongation of youth, concludes that youth must be reintegrated with society. It chiefly recommends new institutions that complement academic schooling with early and substantial work experience; other school reforms are proposed, but are of distinctly secondary importance. The Martin report notes the same bureaucratization and age segregation. It gives more emphasis than Coleman to the impact of the newly understood developmental heterogeneity of youth. With such large numbers of students in today's high school, the Martin report argues, this diversity is so great as to prevent the high school from fulfilling the many intellectual and social requirements currently placed upon it. Therefore, it must be unburdened of some of its present responsibilities for overcoming society's previously unequal allocation of benefits, and for keeping custody of as many youth as possible, as long as possible. The Brown report's view is less analytical and more immediate: during the past 10 to 20 years, the high school has tried to keep up with society's demands, but has been frustrated by continuing crises and by the shifting nature of these demands. The Brown panel assumes almost without question that the high school will remain a key institution in society and that it can be reformed through comprehensive school-community review of its goals, a flexible approach to problems, and some ability to free itself of the burden of the unwilling student.

REFORMS THE REPORTS ADVOCATE

Although they analyze the problem differently, the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports come up with a set of fairly consistent, somewhat overlapping recommendations.*

The most fundamental of the reports' recommendations is what we term *dispersion*--a reversal of the trend toward concentrating youth in segregated institutional environments (mostly schools) for the sake of educational and custodial efficiency. Proposals for dispersion abound, but their main theme is earlier experience in the workplace. This experience can be continuous or intermittent, in public or private industry, for social benefit or private gain, for pay or not for pay, but the objective is the same: to make youth aware of their opportunities, properly motivated toward personal development, and develop less exclusively in the company of one another. Other kinds of dispersion are also proposed--more contact among youths of different ages, experimental institutions that combine ages in residential settings--but the main proposal is the earlier dispersion of young people into society's productive activities.

The logical consequence of this dispersion objective is a strategy of *individualization* and *flexibility*. With the diversity of youth, the multiplication of opportunities for dispersion, and the creation of complementary institutional services, each young person's unique need is the only starting place for program development and each program must be prepared to change quickly to meet the changing needs of individuals and the needs of changing youth cohorts.

The reports recommend more in this vein than merely revised descriptions of existing programs or improved counseling services. For example, they advocate new community-based institutions to lift all new counseling out of the high school; they do not want schools-within-schools and other flexible arrangements, but truly small high schools, alternative and/or specialized schools, and even vouchers to permit the individual to purchase educational services or the

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*In the commission mode of analysis, broadly shared values and assumptions can evidently override somewhat different goals and perceptions of specific evidence, to produce similar recommendations at the level of generality of these reports.

subsidization of work experiences; they do not recommend simply more flexible attendance policies, but altered compulsory attendance laws and new ways to give school credit for out-of-school experience. The introduction of several such new features would fracture the present structure of the high school and constitute a partial de-schooling of secondary education. It would also produce novel educational activities and additional custodial problems, ones calling for close coordination and planning among high schools, community groups, and employers.

The third reform proposed is the *modernization of curricula*. Obviously, some concept of career education would be needed to guide the processes of dispersion and individualization, which concentrate on experience in the workplace. The Martin and Brown reports also perceive several other areas for curriculum development. The Martin report proposes *citizenship education*--not an improved civics course, but a way to organize a student's experience with the heterogeneity of his peers and his own search for independence and responsibility. Other areas are *aesthetic education*, seen as a necessary vision for the interpretation of modern society; *education in the understanding of media*; and *global education* to help youth situate themselves accurately and prepare themselves effectively for the international economic and political realities that their future will hold.

To carry out such reforms, the Brown and Martin reports propose significant *changes in school governance*. These changes include enhancing the student's role in high school decisionmaking and developing, at the individual school, participatory planning that would involve community, school, staff, and students. The new planning process would help establish what locally determined goals the reformed high school should pursue and devise the performance and experience criteria by which the novel non-school educational activities should be accredited. Other governance changes, implied but not clearly spelled out, include connecting high schools and other educational locations and developing in secondary educators the skills required to perform the new managerial and pedagogical tasks.

WHAT THE REPORTS FAIL TO SAY

Our extended observations on the completeness and accuracy of the evidence presented by the reports, and on the wisdom of their recommendations, will be a substantial part of the remaining chapters of this review. Here, we will simply note briefly a few of the general limitations of their analyses.

On the whole, the reports' recommendations flow more discernibly from qualitative judgments about the state of the world than from the social science evidence addressed. Certainly, the conclusions presented--that earlier work contact will improve socialization, that comprehensive high schools cannot succeed, or that lower school-leaving ages will help youth and schools--run far beyond any facts given in evidence. Moreover, there is no consideration whatever of the economic, political, or social costs of any of the proposals, and no consideration* of their technical or managerial feasibility (Can effective programs be designed? Are the education professions willing and able to implement them?). Finally, there is little consideration of the impact upon the proposals of relatively known trends--such as the subsiding growth of the youth cohort, the diminishing economic return of education, or the absence of military conscription. Under the circumstances, the most that can be claimed for any policy proposals is that they may be worth thinking about further and, perhaps, after that, worth trying. (Coleman has been explicit about this in both the PSAC report, 1975, and in *School Review*.)

Another major limitation of the reports is that their recommendations primarily involve reforms in and partial alternatives to institutions of secondary education. This is easy to understand in the Brown and even the Martin report, but the Coleman report is more disappointing as its perspectives and the data on which it is based are more extensive. None of the reports discusses the families the youths are leaving or those that they will form. Similarly, there is little

*The Martin report simply states that major reform proposals should be feasible.

discussion and no recommendations directed expressly at the education of older youth (i.e., in institutions of higher education) or of younger (i.e., in junior high schools and middle schools). Non-educational youth organizations receive some brief and speculative attention in the Coleman report, but are not mentioned by the others. And, most remarkable, considering the importance that the reports attach to expanded experience in the workplace toward the beginning of productive adulthood, the reports give scant attention to policies affecting the quality or quantity of jobs in the labor market. The Coleman report contains a brief section favoring a dual minimum wage and the Martin report concludes that a healthy demand for labor is the best antidote for youth unemployment. None of the reports consider the real ability of the workplace to socialize youth well and deliver a satisfying adulthood, or of the processes by which young people obtain employment (Behn et al.).

A third limitation, perhaps the most serious, lies in the reports' unitary view of youth, school, the economy, and society. Mainly, the reports seem to be reviewing the problems of white, middle-class, male youth; Coleman does so quite explicitly (Coleman et al., 1974, p. 6). The problems affecting this traditional leadership sector of youth are real enough; they are also a group of youth that many panel members knew well from their professional experience. In interpreting their findings, though, we must be alert to the bias that such partial analysis may entail. In reality, youths are male and female, dull and gifted, white and black, Anglo and Hispanic; from white- and blue-collar families; well-to-do and poor; and reside in cities, suburbs, and rural areas where educational and economic environments vary. The reports are not blind to these realities or to the fact that white, male, middle-class values dominate the perspective of secondary schools. The Brown report emphasizes the need to remove race and sex bias from textbooks and counseling; the Martin and Coleman reports consider the major distinctions of race, sex, and class as examples of the kinds of diversity that social and educational policies must attend to rather than suppress. The reports contend, though, that there are pervasive problems in our society's

handling and schooling of youth that transcend all distinctions among youth. Even if this is true, we would observe, reforms initiated as a result would still apply differently to different groups of youth and could lead to serious new inequities in the benefits going to different subgroups of youth.

For example, let us consider the situation of black youth in high school. Notwithstanding the reports' failures to look specifically at the current performance of high schools in serving black youth, a case can be made that the proposed reforms would diminish the isolation of blacks from other youth in the stratified societies of large high schools, and free them from dominant instructional models that may not suit their cultural experience. On the other hand, it might be argued that the new diversity in secondary schooling could harm black students. Patterns of secondary school desegregation would be difficult to sustain, let alone improve, if smaller schools served smaller geographic areas or if non-geographic attendance policies gave whites a new chance to transfer from integrated schools. Moreover, if experience is any guide, secondary educators may not be able to diagnose and assist black students very well. How, for example, can the black student's needs be more accurately assessed and how can workplace experiences be found for ghetto or rural blacks? This diversity in program and place is hardly what the black community has called for; they have usually wanted better traditional education and firmer discipline. The black community has sought, and to some extent achieved, a more equitable share of school resources for their children, and they want their children exposed to these services for a longer period of time. The payoff was expected to be--and has been--better jobs (Smith and Welch). It is by no means certain, then, that the proposed reforms (whether dispersion or less compulsory schooling) will be equitable for black youth. Similar questions involving other subgroups-at-risk should be thoroughly investigated before proposed unitary reforms are adopted.

Finally, the alarming increase in the incidence of deviant behavior among youth--drug abuse, mental health problems, suicides, and criminality (including criminality in schools)--is one of the principal

arguments that youth in the aggregate are troubled; but the reports do not explore this matter. Even while the ephemeral and more political aspects of the "youth rebellion" evaporate, these disturbing symptoms persist and grow. In addition to the short-run or long-run harm they may do themselves, these troubled youths cause society real and immediate harm. The evidence of a growing problem is less ambiguous in this area than in any other and the study of these disturbing behaviors may provide an opportunity to discern the determinants of youth behavior in general.

CONCLUSION

The three reports on adolescents and schooling propose a fairly clear direction for reform: dispersion of youth from schools to workplace and community; individualization and diversification of high school programs; curricula reforms; and new methods of school governance. They adduce quantities of evidence to support these recommendations for institutional change, in testimonial fashion, but they give very little evidence to demonstrate their feasibility or their actual effectiveness. They overlook important equity implications; as well as the rising incidence of deviant and criminal behavior among youth.

The next three sections contain parallel and detailed analyses of the reports. Section II deals with the social processes depicted by the reports--age segregation, prolongation of adolescence, peer group development, etc.--trying to construct them as a series of connected propositions and to evaluate them in the light of relevant social science evidence. Section III focuses similarly on school youth's encounters with the labor market and Section IV covers findings and proposals that concern the organization and performance of high schools. Each of these chapters also spells out major considerations that the reports slight or omit. Our review concludes with Section V, an attempt to define policy steps that seem feasible and sensible, in the light of our review and of events that have occurred since the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports were written.

II. DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIALIZATION OF YOUTH

(Sue Berryman Bobrow)

INTRODUCTION

Social reforms can fail because individuals are incompetent, venal, or lazy. However, they probably fail more frequently because the original theories used to analyze the problem and generate solutions are wrong. The purpose of this section is to examine the validity of the theories of youth, which appear in the Martin, Coleman, and Brown reports. If any of the reports' policy recommendations are implemented, these theories promise to become the ones that determine: (1) what people expect from the policy--how they judge its success or failure; and (2) how people implement the policy. If the reports' theories of youth are more myth than reality, there will be a misalignment between what is problematic about and for youth and the social changes designed to solve these problems--with all of the costs associated with well-intentioned, but misdirected, policy interventions.

This section is organized into three parts. The first part describes some of the possibilities and constraints of the adolescent life stage in contemporary America. The second part presents a model of the reports' theories about youth and analyzes the validity of the major assumptions represented in the model. The third part treats omissions in the reports--omitted variables and omitted problems of youth.

ADOLESCENT CONTEXT

"Adolescence" has meaning in relation to the concepts of childhood and adulthood. As Campbell (1971) suggests, it is probably useful to define its lower limit physiologically (not earlier than the onset of puberty) and its upper limit socially (not later than the assumption of marital and occupation responsibilities).

"Adolescent behaviors" can be explained as inherent characteristics of individuals who evidence the behaviors--personality explanations. Or they can be explained as predictable reactions to the physiological and social changes and constraints associated with the adolescent life-stage--

social-psychological explanations. These two different interpretations imply different youth policies. If the behavior is attributed to inherent characteristics of individuals, appropriate policies are ones that control the individuals themselves. If the behavior is attributed to characteristics of the adolescent situation, appropriate policies are ones that affect characteristics of the situation. The reports use a situational explanation of youth behaviors and tender recommendations designed to alter that situation. Thus, their specific assumptions about youth are most appropriately evaluated in that context.

The reports discuss several characteristics of the adolescent situation. However, they do not always distinguish life-stage characteristics from secular trends from historical fluctuations.* Since these different concepts have different policy implications, whether or not a characteristic of youth more closely approximates a life-stage characteristic, a secular trend, or a fluctuation makes a difference.

A *life-stage characteristic* is one restricted to one stage of the life cycle (e.g., adolescence) and affects cohorts who move through that stage in a similar way. For example, puberty is a characteristic of the adolescent life-stage. These characteristics seem to derive from such things as age-related properties of the human organism (e.g., sexual development of the organism) or from a society's age-related distributions of rights and obligations.

A *secular trend* is a characteristic that continues over a period of at least several decades, increasingly or decreasingly affects sequential youth cohorts, and usually affects all age groups in the society, although perhaps differently. The gradual shift of the American family structure from extended to nuclear is an example of a secular trend. Secular trends tend to be the result of several other major characteristics of the society, such as industrialization, growth of rational knowledge, development of transportation networks, and geographical mobility of families. Consequently, secular trends are often difficult to affect directly, but institutional adjustments can be made to cope with their consequences.

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*The concepts of life-stage characteristics, secular trends, and historical fluctuations are related to concepts in cohort analysis (e.g., Mason et al.). Our concept of a life-stage characteristic is the same as what is often called an "age effect" in cohort analysis; what we call a secular trend is a type of period effect. An historical fluctuation includes

A *historical fluctuation* is a characteristic that lasts a limited period of time. For example, affluence in America appears to be an increasing secular trend; the recession from which we are now emerging, a historical fluctuation. It may have short-term effects that disappear when the event itself concludes. Or it may have long-term effects, a common one being what is called a "cohort" or "generational" effect. In this case, the long-term effects are essentially confined to those cohorts who experienced the fluctuation directly and who it affected most heavily--e.g., as in the "depression generation." A historical fluctuation affects subsequent cohorts only if it disturbs more basic features of the society. To the extent that a characteristic is a historical fluctuation, it may make little sense to invest resources in affecting the problems produced by it. The event may have concluded--and its effects dissipated--before the policy designed to handle the effects can be implemented.*

This section deals with the nature of the adolescent situation in terms of these distinctions among life-stage characteristics, secular trends, and historical fluctuations.

Life-Stage Characteristics

Although all cultures do not have an extended transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, younger cohorts in every social group experience (1) the arrival of puberty; (2) social pressure to assume adult work and familial roles; and (3) inter-generational tension, as the result of the impending realignment of younger and older cohorts. The chronological ages at which these events occur--and, consequently, the extent to which they occur simultaneously--vary from society to society, as a function of such group variables as life expectancy of its members, nutritional level, the nature of work, etc.

Freud's personality theory and those of his successors have emphasized that characteristics of the adolescent life-stage confront the

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two kinds of effects: "blips" in the data (i.e., one shot effects) and what are called cohort, or generational, effects in cohort analysis.

*In general, policy-makers in the private or public sector should be cautious about responding to "crises" associated with youth. Crises, by definition, tend to represent unexpected extremes in social events. Since extremes are rare (i.e., low probability events), behaviors will tend to return to more typical patterns in the absence of a policy intervention (Furby).

individual with a substantial psychological challenge. Puberty disturbs old patterns of impulse control, and the impending assumption of adult roles resurrects any unresolved childhood crises involving questions of independence and dependence, abandonment and replacement, mastery and powerlessness. These crises can be more or less successfully resolved, and psychologists are beginning to understand the consequences of unresolved adolescent crises in the adult's response to occupational, marital, and parenting crises. The conditions for a successful psychological negotiation of adolescence are not entirely clear and probably vary at least by sex and social class of the indiviudal. In industrialized societies, the individual seems to need *time* without major commitment to adult roles* (e.g., Erickson's "psychological moratorium"). Early commitment to marriage, child rearing, or full-time work can produce premature identity consolidation and ego constriction. However, *how* that time is spent seems equally important. The individual seems to need meaningful, but not irrevocable confrontation with sexuality and impending adult roles--although it is not clear that these confrontations are best conducted while the individual is still in the parents' home. By itself, a moratorium pushes *up* the age at which youth commit themselves to adult roles.

Secular Trends

Several secular trends in contemporary America affect the definition, timing, and regulation of the life-stage aspects of adolescence. Some of the most important trends are discussed below.

Timing of Puberty. As the reports note, contemporary youth reach puberty approximately two years earlier than their counterparts did in 1900. This change pushes *down* the age at which youth are physically capable of assuming adult sexual roles. At least one report (Martin) argues that earlier physical maturity implies the appropriateness of "more mature treatment of adolescents." To the extent that this recommendation implies

*Douvan and Adelson (1966) note that adolescents' deferred full-time commitment to the labor force has complications, but has not worked out badly for ordinary adolescents. "It offers them the occasion for making discoveries about himself and others. The youngster needs time, needs the sense of unlimited time, and usually he will find or make the time. Even in the overorganized segment of the middle class ... he will discover his own slow-down techniques ..." (pp. 179-180).

that earlier physical maturity indicates earlier social and emotional maturity, it should be noted that these three aspects of maturity--physical, social, and emotional--are separate dimensions of human development. Rates of emotional and social maturity are affected by many factors, only one of which is the rate of physical development.

Occupational, Educational, and Marital Choices. Contemporary American youth, especially males, seem to have access to more occupational, educational, and marital* alternatives than their nineteenth-century counterparts. However, an increase in opportunities also implies more chances to make bad choices. If youth are to make use of their increased opportunities, they require meaningful access to alternatives without premature commitment. An increase in opportunities pushes *up* the age at which youth might be expected to assume adult work and familial roles. It also creates pressure on institutions to offer youth meaningful chances to try these different options at earlier ages to allow easier re-selection of occupation, mate, and education at later stages in the life cycle, or both.

Value of Parental Information. It is easy to exaggerate the speed at which contemporary America is changing. However, the adolescent experiences of contemporary American parents may be less useful to their adolescent children than those of nineteenth-century parents were to theirs. For example occupational credentialing requirements seem to be changing more rapidly. New opportunities for women, access to contraceptives and abortion, and changes in sexual mores have, for practical purposes, diminished the relevance of parental criteria for marriage and child-bearing decisions. Consequently, contemporary adolescents have more responsibility for making major life decisions. Two complementary adjustments to the reduced relevance of parental experience are giving youth more time in which to make choices on their own, and restructuring institutions other than the family to compensate for parental inadequacies.

Labor Market Conditions. Although the majority of young people work, youth's opportunities for full-time work are more restricted now

*For example, increased parental mobility and higher rates of college attendance for both sexes increase the number of pools from which mates can be chosen.

than in the nineteenth century, for such reasons as child labor laws, union barriers, and higher skill and credentialing requirements. These constraints on youth's participation in the labor market, many of which protect jobs for adult workers, push up the age at which youth can enter the full-time labor market and, consequently, delay their exposure to meaningful occupational options. Possible adjustment mechanisms to these constraints are the same as those for occupational, educational, and marital choices.

Credentialing. Increasingly, credentials are the price of admission to many occupations in the soceity. Consequently, youth are expected and pressured to invest more time in education. The effect is to delay the age at which youth are expected to assume the responsibilities normally associated with adulthood.

Affluence. Despite recessions, the long-term secular trend in the United States is for more families to have more real income. For adolescents, this means that parents are more able to give them consumer goods and outright gifts of money. These "transfer payments" can reduce pressure on youth to work to obtain things for themselves or can be used to augment the income that adolescents can obtain through their own work. Parents who do not need adolescent contributions to family income are less apt to pressure adolescents to work or to leave home to reduce costs. The overall effect of increased affluence is that youth can stay home longer, work less, or, if they work, keep the money for their personal needs.

Result: Disjuncture in the Timing of Adolescent Events. The earlier modal age at which puberty occurs pushes down the age at which adolescents are physically capable of assuming adult sexual roles. The effects of the psychological, economic, and social variables are to push up the age at which it is desirable, practical, necessary, or possible for youth to assume adult work and familial roles. The *joint* effect of these variables is to separate dramatically in time contemporary adolescents' physical capacities and their social/economic/psychological capacities for adulthood. The consequences of "out-of-phaseness," per se, are not well known, although the phenomenon is not unique to the United States, the twentieth century, or complex societies.

Historical Fluctuations

A historical fluctuation is a temporary event, perhaps as long as a decade, which is not associated with long-run trends. When it occurs, it can be expected to affect persons in different stages of the life-cycle differentially, but in somewhat predictable ways. The adolescent stage can and has recently been affected by the following fluctuations:*

- *War.* Youth fight wars that adults start. In this situation youth is potentially an interest group. Whether or not youth *organize* as an interest group depends on other circumstances.
- *Extremes in the economy.* Economic booms increase youth's job opportunities and allow parents to purchase longer preparation periods for their children. Recession or depression decreases youth's job opportunities and the ability of some of them to stay in school. It also increases the incentives to stay in school until jobs are available.
- *Dramatic differences in the size of adjacent cohorts.* When a cohort is substantially larger or smaller than the immediately prior cohort, it under-occupies or exceeds the number of slots in social institutions--schools, the economy, hospitals, etc. Under- or over-supply of occupants may or may not produce severe dislocation, depending on available adjustment mechanisms. The Coleman report suggests that a smaller ratio between the sizes of adult and youth cohorts may affect the quality of youth socialization. The effects of a smaller ratio are not known. The ratio of the total adult cohort to the total youth cohort may be less relevant than the ratio of those most concerned with youth's socialization (parents and teachers) to the total youth cohort. We know that children from large families perform less well on several measures than those from small families, but much of this effect is attributable to the association between family size and poverty, not necessarily to the ratio of parents to number of children. The ratio of teachers to the youth cohort can be and has been adjusted by employing a larger proportion of the adult cohort in teaching.

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*There are other fluctuations that can affect youth and have occurred in other societies or at other periods in American society. Two examples are: dramatic asymmetry in the sex ratio--usually as the result of war, and different spacings of children. The former obviously affects youth's marital choices. The effects of the latter are not known, but close versus far-apart spacing of siblings would seem to make a difference. For example, the nature of the crises for living children who are being displaced by a newborn varies by age of the living child.

Although the reports recognize the occurrence of several of these events, they do not give much weight to them as reasons for recent youth behavior. For example, they tend to assume that adolescent responses to the Vietnam war represent new, long-term characteristics of youth. While responses to a fluctuation can become trends, it is appropriate to be cautious in assuming that reactions will have a persistence that the provocation itself does not have.*

Variations Among Adolescents

Although the reports clearly recognize that rates of biological, psychological, and social development differ among adolescents, they do not discuss systematic variation in the adolescent situation by sex, social class, and race. For example, occupational, educational, and marital opportunities and imperatives vary by these three characteristics. A female is socialized to have different expectations for her future than a male, and this difference is reflected in whether she expects to work full-time or part-time, the occupation to which she aspires, and the amount and quality of education she undertakes (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). Upwardly mobile working-class youth tend to aspire to occupations with less prestige than an upwardly mobile youth from the middle class. Partly because ethnic category is so strongly associated with social class, black and Spanish-speaking youth are more apt to select traditional mobility avenues--e.g., the military (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). As a second example, the psychological resolutions required for successful transition to adulthood seem to vary substantially for males and females (Douvan and Adelson, 1966); we would certainly expect them to vary by race and social class.

Historical fluctuations also affect youth's opportunities, constraints, and imperatives differently by race, sex, and social class. For example, the Vietnam war restricted the options of lower-class males more than those of middle-class males, in part because lower-class males were less able to use college as a way of avoiding the draft. The war

*As many have observed, campus protests and anti-adult rhetoric have almost disappeared since the end of the Vietnam war.

restricted the options of males in general more than those of females. A recession is more apt to preclude college for poorer youth than for upper-middle-class youth.

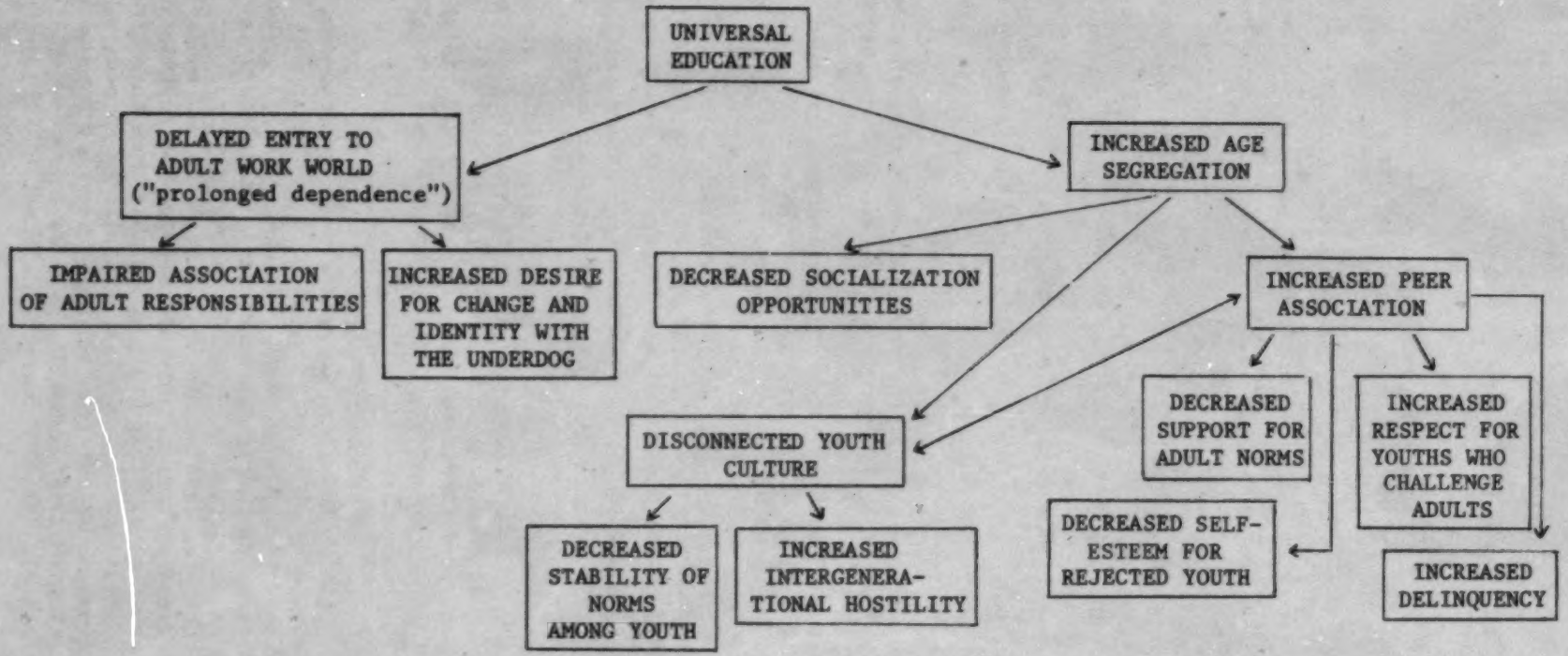
We have dealt with the context within which American youth move--their physiological, psychological, social, and economic constraints and opportunities. Whether or not a constraint or opportunity is a constant, secular trend, or a historical fluctuation profoundly affects what we can expect youth to do in the future--the same or different, more or less. It thus defines what we can expect to remain, appear, or disappear as a problem for youth and adults.

REPORTS' PREMISES ABOUT YOUTH

The Martin and Coleman reports, especially, make a number of assumptions about youth and youth culture. Our purpose in this subsection is to specify a model of the theories of youth used by these two reports, to comment briefly on the overall model, and to evaluate the validity of assertions contained in the model.

Model of the Reports' Theories

In their background papers and summary comments on the development and socialization of youth, the Martin and Coleman reports maintain that certain events have occurred and assume implicitly or explicitly that certain causal relationships exist between these events. Fig. 1 represents a model of these events and relationships. The arrows in the figure indicate "cause," in the sense of "contribute to." The reports do not assume that an event that they see as causing another is the sole cause of the other event. If the arrow is single-headed, one-way causation is meant. For example, the Coleman report seems to assume that delayed entry into the adult world contributes to an increased desire for change and identity with the underdog. It does not assume that increased desire for change causes delayed entry. However, a double-headed arrow indicates mutual causation. This situation occurs only once in Fig. 1: the reports assume that increased peer association contributes to a disconnected youth culture and vice-versa.



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Fig. 1: A Model of the Reports' Theories of Youth

Since each report mentions concerns not addressed in the other, Fig. 1 does not represent a model for either report by itself. However, there is sufficient overlap in concepts and assumed relationships between them that Fig. 1 can reasonably be considered a model for the two reports together. For example, both the Martin and Coleman reports assume that youth are more isolated from adults today than at any previous time in American history,*,** with the consequencial breakdown in the transmission mechanisms of society, a disconnected youth culture, and increased intergenerational hostilities (Martin, pp. 19-20; Coleman, p. 132). Both reports connect the idea of increased age segregation with that of increased peer association.***,† They both comment on the value of peer

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*"A second observation is the little noted fact that only in the last twenty-five years has the majority of our teenagers, through high school attendance, been increasingly separated from significant contact with older adults, other than parents and teachers. Thus the successful achievement of a high school experience for nearly everyone has been accompanied by a de-coupling of the generations--a delayed entry into the adult world--a prolongation of the institutional controls of childhood--a loss in the early transmission of adult cultural patterns, leaving a whole age-cohort with minimum social controls, subject to rapid fad-like whims, enthusiasms and imprecise adult models, in short the teenager as caricature" (Martin, p. 6).

**"Our society has changed in the past century from one in which the young of this age (14-24) were in frequent and continued contact with persons older than they to one in which adult contacts are confined to parents and teachers. The age segregation is extensive enough to deprive youth and adults from effective contact with another, yet not complete enough so that the young are required to establish institutions and activities to serve their own needs. Thus many of the disadvantages of age-segregating are present, without many of the advantages" (Coleman, p. 131).

***"A second element that characterizes the culture of youth is similar to the first, but not the same: it is the pyschic attachment of youth to others their own age. Today, for many youth, their most intimate psychic bonds are with one another" (Coleman, p. 115). "What is important about these elements that characterize youth culture is that they have their origins in the relation of youth to the rest of society. Youth are segregated from adults by the economic and educational institutions created by adults, they are deprived of psychic support from persons of other ages, a psychic support that once came from the family, they are subordinate and powerless in relation to adults, and outsiders to the dominant social institutions. Yet they have money, they have access to a wide range of communication media, and control of some, and they are relatively large in number" (Coleman, p. 125).

association,[*,**] and both assume that the increase in peer association has certain negative consequences. The Martin report[***] elaborates these consequences more than the Coleman study, leading to the inclusion of concepts and relationships in Fig. 1 that do not clearly appear in the Coleman report--i.e., the relationships between "increased peer association" and "decreased support for adult norms," "decreased self-esteem for rejected youth," and "increased delinquency."

General Comment on the Model

Before we analyze the specific assumptions of the model, it is useful to look at the overall "sense and sensibility" of the concepts and relationships represented in Fig. 1. Most of the concepts are

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[†]"Age segregation has resulted in a much greater association of youth with their age peers, and thus has significantly increased the influence of the peer group dynamic on American adolescents" (Martin, Part II, p. 52).

[*]Coleman report, pages 131-132; also: "Those needs (for close relations) have always existed for young persons, and for persons of all ages" (Coleman, p. 116).

[**]"These (peer) groups provide only a *transitional* structure between the family group and the larger society. They assist in the development of a heterosexual role; provide feedback about behavior; afford a means of understanding self and others; help adolescents adapt to new relationships; provide job information; provide a highly personal and emotionally important form of guidance, which includes sympathy, support, and help in meeting peer and/or social expectations (Martin, p. 52).

[***]"These age-segregated peer groups have become a major educational force in the lives of adolescents. Their lack of *generational stability* and their *narrow age-base*, however, make them subject to rapidity of change in the activities and personal styles they endorse. Although such groups have generally in the past reinforced rather than opposed adult values, there is some feeling that such reinforcement is declining and will continue to do so as population mobility, the influence of the mass media, the isolation of youth from adults and its related phenomenon of peer group rootlessness increase. Adolescent peer groups are also a powerful factor in the tendency toward delinquent and anti-social behavior, have a particularly significant effect on determining the operating norms of classroom behavior, and have an important influence on individual self-esteem. The latter is particularly important because significant numbers of youth (11-22% in one study) are ignored by their peers or are otherwise seriously estranged from meaningful group involvement. Such peer-rejection can serve as a difficult obstacle to the development of self-esteem and to learning" (Martin, Part II, pp. 52-53).

consistent with common sense or with at least some social theories about the causes and consequences of clique formation, the causes of delinquency, and the social-psychological consequences of powerlessness. For example, if youth spend more years in educational institutions, it is reasonable to expect that they will enter the full-time work force at later ages--and thus be economically dependent on parents for a longer period of time. Our knowledge of the relation between perceived oppression and social movements leads us to expect that *if* youth perceive delayed entry into the adult world as oppressive, they might seek to change the social system and to affiliate with other oppressed groups. However, it is not clear why *delayed* assumption of adult responsibilites should necessarily produce *impaired* assumption--doing something later can mean doing it better, not necessarily less well.

If the educational institutions in which youth spend more time were composed primarily of youth, increased day-to-day segregation of youth from adults could be a result. If these two groups spent more time apart from each other, the adult would have, at least quantitatively, fewer opportunities to socialize the youth group. If this occurred, the cultural systems of the two groups might diverge. If there were divergence in the cultural systems of the two groups, they would be less apt to be in consensus on various social issues that arise--thus increasing the possibility of conflict between them. However, the idea that a disjuncture between adult and youth norms causes less stability in the norms of the youth group is not convincing. The greater influence of each age group upon its individual members should produce *greater* stability of norms *within* each age group.

If youth and adults spent less time with each other, it is probable that youth would spend much of the "released time" with each other. In other words, increased peer association seems plausible. Increased interaction among youth would decrease support for adult norms only if the increased interaction led to a divergence in the basic norms of the two groups. Similarly, youths might pay greater respect to peers who challenge adults, but only if the two groups were in conflict with each other over some issue.

The proposed link between increased peer association and increased juvenile delinquency is also plausible. One of the standard social theories of juvenile delinquency argues that delinquency occurs as the result of individuals' interactions with existing delinquent subgroups. Thus, more interaction among youth in general could also increase interaction with delinquent subgroups.

As these comments reveal, the reports' theories do not have major internal inconsistencies or many implausible assumptions. However, the truth of any individual premise depends heavily on various conditions being met--on various "ifs" being the case.

Beyond questions about the reports' theories of youth is a question about the *weltanschauung* behind those theories. We suggest that the reports have a "world view" that defines the youth situation as a "crisis" and the protagonists as articulate, middle- or upper-middle class white males.

This view is not surprising. The various task forces on youth were convened at least partly in response to a "crisis of youth"--i.e., in response to the highly publicized, bewildering, and sometimes frightening behaviors of some youth in the 1960s. The definition of youth as articulate, middle- or upper-middle class, white males is also not surprising--these youth most resembled the young people with whom many of the authors would be expected to have contact in their roles as parents or faculty members.

The reports seem to interpret "crisis" in two ways: as "lost opportunity" and as "danger." They seem to see the longer schooling and later ages at which youth assume full-time work responsibilities as providing an opportunity for youth. The opportunity is *time*--time to achieve greater psychological integration and to prepare for sounder marital and occupational choices than would otherwise be possible. The sense of lost opportunity seems to derive from a belief that our social institutions are not set up to help youth use this time constructively.

The reports also seem to see the delayed entry into adulthood as *danger*. The very time used for experimenting with different occupations and potential mates also involves prolonged dependence. The reports seem to assume that prolonged dependence leads to alienation, which, in

turn, leads to an "out of control" age group--as evidenced by campus protests, anti-adult rhetoric, and value gaps between youth and adults.

The implicit or explicit definition of youth as middle- or upper-middle class, white males means that the reports are considering only about 25 percent of the population of individuals 14 to 24 years old in 1974.* However, the reports put forth recommendations that are expected to apply to all adolescents.

Evaluation of the Specific Assumptions of the Model

In this subsection, we assess those premises represented in Fig. 1 that are central to the cases made by the Coleman and Martin reports and have implications for policy-makers:

(1) There is now universal education.
(2) There is delayed entry into the adult world.
(3) There is an impaired assumption of adult responsibilities.
(4) There is increased segregation of youth from other age groups in the society.
(5) There is a disconnected youth culture.
(6) There is increased social association among adolescents.
(7) There is increased inter-generational hostility.

We also examine the assumptions that there is increased desire for change and identity with the underdog--less because these assumptions are central to the reports' explicit argument than because they are central to the view that prolonged dependence leads to alienation, which, in turn, leads to an "out of control" age group. To the extent that we do not see increased desire for change and identity with the underdog, the interpretation of delayed entry as oppressive and alienating becomes less

*Male white adolescents, 14 to 24 years of age, from families with incomes of $12,000 or more per year represented approximately 28 percent of the population of individuals 14 to 24 years old in 1974. If an income of $15,000 or more per year were used as the definition of middle or higher class, then white male, middle- or higher class adolescents would represent 21 percent of all adolescents. (Table 30, *Consumer Income*, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 97, January 1975, p. 68.)

plausible. We do not assess the proposition that increased peer association causes increased delinquency because neither report stresses the question beyond connecting it casually with increased peer association. Thus, it is treated as an omission and discussed later in this subsection.

The rest of this subsection examines the eight premises in terms of these questions:

- What evidence exists about the frequency and distribution of an assumed characteristic of youth?
- What are its possible causes: Historical fluctuations? Secular trends? Characteristics of the adolescent stage in the life-cycle? Characteristics of adults who have the power to define adolescent behavior as disturbing or satisfactory?*
- What evidence exists for the assumed consequences of the characteristic?

Particularly since the reports implicitly or explicitly deal with white, male, and middle- or upper-class youth, it would be desirable to evaluate the reports' assumptions about youth--and consequently the appropriateness of their recommendations--in terms of data on sociologically different groups of adolescents. Opportunities, constraints, expectations, and, consequently, social-psychological developmental processes can be expected to vary for adolescents by characteristics such as sex, ethnic origin, and economic position of their families. Unfortunately, readily accessible data on youth, although frequently based on nationally representative samples of young people, are presented in aggregate form (e.g., as percentages for the whole sample). We can use such data to evaluate those statements in the reports that are presumed to apply to youth in general. However, the data cover up differences between distinct groups and do not allow us to determine the validity of the reports' statements--and, consequently, the appropriateness of their

*For example, to the extent that aging males fear social and sexual replacement by young males, they might be expected to define behaviors of young males as "threatening" and in need of "control."

recommendations--for the groups of adolescents that can be expected to take different paths to adulthood.

Universal Education → Delayed Entry into Adult World. A larger proportion of youth are enrolled in high school and college now than at any time in American history (see Section I). However, if we define "entry into the adult world" as participating part-time or full-time in the labor force--a definition that the reports implicitly use, the following data are instructive. Females aged 16 to 24 years showed a steady *increase* in labor force participation rates from 1947 to 1974, even though in the same period females of this age increasingly participated in schooling* and the median age for first marriage for females increased only from 20.3 years in 1950 to 20.9 years in 1971. By 1974, female labor force participation rates stood at 40 percent, 58 percent, and 63 percent for 16- to 17-year-olds, 18- to 19-year-olds, and 20- to 24-year-olds, respectively. From 1947 to 1974, male labor force participation rates for 16- to 17-year-olds showed a decline during the 1950s and a rise during the last decade. In 1974, the rate was 51 percent. For 18- to 19-year-olds, there has been a moderate decline, consistent with increased rates of college attendance. Nevertheless, the rate in 1974 was 74 percent. For 20- to 24-year-olds, the rates show no particular trend, standing at 87 percent in 1974. A longitudinal national sample of young males from 1966 to 1969 showed that 80 percent held a summer job after ninth grade; 70 percent after tenth grade; and 80 percent after eleventh (Johnston and Bachman, 1973). The *National Longitudinal Study* (1975) of 1972 high school seniors showed that only 19 percent of the male seniors and 29 percent of the female seniors had no paid or unpaid job during the week, excluding vacations.

In general, these figures for male and female youth do *not* indicate increasing delay in entering the adult world (defined as labor force participation) from 1947 to 1974. In light of these data, the relevance

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*For example, 81 percent of females 16-17 years, 30 percent of females aged 18-19, and 7 percent of females 20-24 years were enrolled in school in 1960. In 1970, the percentages for these female age groups were 89 percent, 42 percent, and 15 percent, respectively.

of the reports' recommendations for earlier work opportunities for youth in general (e.g., alternation of work and school and incorporating youth in work organizations) is not clear. However, they may be very relevant for youth who cannot find even part-time work--or for all youth, if the question of the quality of work is raised.

Delayed Entry → Impaired Assumption of Adult Responsibilities. The reports do not clearly define what they expect to be the long-term costs of the presumed delayed entry. However, work and family formation can be considered two major areas of adult life. What we treat as instances of impairment is a question of values. On the basis of traditional American values, we can look for evidence of: (1) reduced participation in and commitment to work; and (2) decreasing stability in the families formed.

If we restrict our consideration of adult labor force participation to the ages 25 to 64, we can ask whether the cohort aged 25 to 34 in 1974 shows less labor force participation than that age group in earlier years. If there were a recent impaired assumption of adult work responsibilities, it should manifest itself in the labor force participation rates of the recent 25- to 34-year-old cohort. The data show that, from 1947 to 1974, female labor force participation rates have increased for all age groups--25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, and 55 to 64. For males from 1947 to 1974, we find that there is slightly less labor force participation for the 25- to 34-year-old age group in 1974 than in 1970 and 1960, but more than in 1950. However, the decline from 1960 to 1974 for 25- to 34-year-olds is about the same as the decline for the 35- to 44-year-olds for the same period and less than the decline for the 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 age groups. In other words, controlling for a slight secular decline in male labor force participation rates from 1960 to 1974, the 25- to 34-year-olds in 1974 show no change in labor force participation relative to their age counterparts in earlier years.

While labor force participation seems unaffected by delayed entry, productivity on the job and attitudes toward work might be affected. However, productivity data cited in Section III do not indicate impaired productivity. The results of a national attitude survey of college youth in 1973 (Yankelovich) are not particularly consistent with the

assertion of a new anti-work ethic among youth. As the survey shows, 81 percent believe that commitment to a meaningful career is a very important part of a person's life; 85 percent feel that business is entitled to make a profit; 84 percent believe that doing any job well is important, no matter how menial. Asked to rate the importance of ten items in their lives, 84 percent of 1972 high school seniors selected "being successful in my line of work" as very important (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). More respondents rated this as very important than they did any of the other nine items.

It is true that 30 percent would welcome less emphasis on working hard. However, we do not have data on this question for the same age group or for older age groups across time. Thus, we do not know if this percentage is significantly larger than it would have been in earlier decades for the same age group, nor do we know if there is a similar current trend toward wanting to work less hard that affects all age groups.

The question of family formation is also complicated. Since early marriages have a significantly higher probability of ending in divorce than later marriages, we could interpret any evidence that youth are marrying at an increasingly *early* age as indicating impaired assumption of adult responsibilities. In fact, the median age of first marriages for males and females has changed very little from 1950 to 1971: from 20.3 to 20.9 years for females and from 22.8 to 23.1 for males. Although the divorce rates for younger adults are substantially higher now than for their age counterparts in previous decades, divorce rates are substantially higher for all age groups. Interpretation of the change for younger adults is therefore clouded by the strong secular trend in divorce, and we cannot treat the increase in divorce rates for young adults as an obvious consequence of delayed entry.

Delayed Entry → Increased Desire for Change and Identity with Underdog. The Coleman report, especially, assumes a recent increased desire among adolescents for change and identification with the underdog in response to delayed entry to the adult world (pp. 122-125). As we mentioned earlier, this assumption is less central to the report's explicit theories of youth than to its underlying view that delayed entry is oppressive

and alienating. If youth perceive themselves as "held at bay" by adults, they could try to alter the power structure and identify with other groups in oppressed conditions.

We assume that the youth movements of the 1960s are a basis for the Coleman report's premise that adolescents show increased desire for change. Yet these movements have occurred sporadically throughout history. They seem to represent historical fluctuations rather than trends, occurring in response to unique contributions of demographic, economic, political, and social factors. The question seems to be less why is there increase in adolescents' desires to change, than why do youth movements occur at one time and not another--why in the 1930s and 1960s and not in the 1950s and early 1970s?

Youth movements seem to *emerge out* of general conditions favoring change; they do not seem to *create* those conditions. For example, the 1930s was a period of general social stress and change--a liberal decade characterized by increased governmental intervention. It was during this historical period that youth signed the Oxford Pledge and demonstrated for international peace and American non-involvement in the impending European war. The 1950s was a politically conservative period, and youth were politically inactive. The 1960s was literally inaugurated by John Kennedy's assumption of the Presidency. Although, in reality, Kennedy may have been somewhat conservative, he "symbolized a romantic, apocalyptic vision for a fresh and idealistic generation of black and white youth" (Braungart, p. 259). The election of Richard Nixon in 1968 marked a new conservative mood for the nation, and the youth movements of the 1960s have, in fact, trailed away. It seems more fruitful to treat youthful desires for change as fluctuations, *not* trends, and as determined by, not determining, the occurrence of liberal political movements within the adult society. As such, these desires are not convincingly interpreted as a result of increasingly delayed entry into adulthood.

The presumed increase in concern for the underdog among youth is even harder to demonstrate.* Youth's response to the Vietnam war in

*If "concern for the underdog" is equated with *idealism*, then Adelson's comment is relevant:

the 1960s represented, in part, a concern for themselves in the American tradition of interest groups. Although youth have worked in the cause of the disadvantaged and oppressed, the ideology and leadership of many of these causes have been provided by adults--e.g., the civil rights movement, the women's movement. In response to the *National Longitudinal Study* (1975) question about the importance of ten items to a person's life, 27.1 percent of the sample of high school seniors rated "working to correct social and economic inequities" as very important. The same concept ranked sixth in the frequency of being rated as very important--in contrast to the item "being successful in my line of work" (see above).

It is also possible that what has often been interpreted as youth's idealistic concern for others is more a function of cognitive development than of values. In a study of adolescents 12 to 18 years of age, Adelson (1975) found that the younger the individual, the more simplistic, confused, and moralistic the responses were to questions about injustice. In other words, what we interpret as "idealism" may be partly a cognitive inability to grasp complex political and social processes.

Universal Education → Increased Age Segregation. The reports argue that longer schooling for youth has increased their separation from adults. The authors see increased age segregation as an important cause of other events disturbing to them--e.g., disjuncture between youth and adult cultures--and the main point of several of their policy recommendations is to increase the interaction between adults and adolescents.

"The pursuit of adolescent idealism has proven to be like other celebrated quests--such as the searches for the Abominable Snowman and the Loch Ness monster, for example. Rumors are heard that it exists, sightings are made, footsteps are found. Finally, a scientific expedition equipped with the latest technology is sent out, and it returns to report that no reliable evidence can be found. Still, the rumors persist ... there are some things we want to believe and therefore do believe, and no evidence to the contrary will persuade us otherwise. I have suggested on another occasion that the adolescent serves as a projective figure in the American mind; one of the qualities we impute to that figure is a heightened idealism, the view that he is not yet corrupted by circumstance, but tingles with a fresh sense of the possibilities for mankind" (Adelson, p. 71).

The validity of increased age segregation and its presumed consequences are therefore central to their case.

In assessing this premise, our first difficulty lies in determining what is meant by "isolation from adults." Isolation from which adults? From adult members of extended kin groups? If so, there *is* more isolation today. The isolation affects all age groups in the society--elderly, middle-aged, young adults, youth and children, and, in this sense, is not unique to youth. This may not be a particularly desirable state of affairs for any age group, and it is possible, although not known, that adolescents may be more affected by isolation than other age groups. At the same time, while most Americans are no longer embedded in extended kin groups, regardless of their ages, the increase in life expectancy means that one's grandparents--and parents--are more apt to be alive during one's adolescent years than was probable in the nineteenth century. It is not clear how to assess a situation where youth have much less contact with living adult kin, but are more apt to *have* living adult kin.

Are the reports talking about quantity of adult contacts, or quality? Contemporary adolescents probably *know* more adults than their nineteenth-century counterparts, but contact is probably less continuous and extensive. Social contacts for all age groups tend to be more transitory and superficial, although, again, youth may be more affected by this characteristic of contemporary life than other age groups. Youth observe a variety of adults and adult situations (work, family) on television--it is estimated that adolescents watch television an average of 20.14 hours per week. Are these vicarious contacts with adults relevant? Although adults and youth were in closer *physical* proximity in earlier decades, there was greater *social* distance between generations. Historical accounts and autobiographical materials of nineteenth-century Americans leave an impression that, although parents and children may have spent more time together, they may not have been psychologically as close as contemporary parents and children. How do we trade off these two situations?

While nineteenth-century youth learned work skills and habits by observing and working with adult kin and contemporary youth are more cut

off from *parental* work in the labor market, a large proportion of today's youth *are* in contact with adults in work settings. However, it is not clear that work contact with kin or adults per se is a problem for today's youth.

In the nineteenth century, a youth's work options more frequently consisted of his kinsmen's trades--e.g., farming, carpentry, retailing. Kin were consequently relevant to socializing youth into the labor market. Today's youth face a dramatic increase in career alternatives, and kin members and the average adult know little about many of these options--the credentials they require, the career progression they involve, their projected labor supplies and demands. More work for youth, per se, or more contact with kin and adults, per se, will not necessarily give youth the socialization they need for this kind of job market situation.

In sum, youth are more segregated from other age groups than their earlier counterparts, but age segregation is a secular trend that is affecting people of all ages in our society. Contemporary youth do not clearly have quantitatively fewer adult contacts than nineteenth-century youth, and any qualitative differences again tend to characterize the nature of all social contacts in the society. What greater age segregation and more transitory relationships are doing to all of us, including youth, is not clear. How we compare these contemporary costs with the costs associated with more age integration is even less clear. Increasing youth contacts with adults in work settings will not necessarily socialize them in a relevant way--i.e., inform them of contemporary labor market possibilities or their requirements and payoffs. On the other hand, purposive contact with adults and work, such as suggested in the Martin report (participatory education, out-of-school centers of learning for youth and adults) does seem to have the potential of facilitating the socialization of youth.

Increased Age Segregation → Emergence of Distinct Youth Culture. The question about a distinct youth culture is usually treated as a question about continuities and discontinuities between generations, i.e., between different-aged cohorts. However, the Coleman and Martin reports' assumption that increased age segregation encourages a distinct

youth culture can also be seen as a concern about a breakdown in the basic cultural transmission processes between *particular* adults and *particular* youth (i.e., between parents and their children). Consequently, we look at the question of continuities and discontinuities in two ways: between parents and their children and between youth cohorts and older cohorts. The question about parents and children is important in two ways. If we find major discontinuities between these two groups, the traditional socialization mechanisms would seem to be breaking down--a finding with implications for questions of cultural stability. If we do not find major discontinuities between parents and their children and do find them between generations, the generational difference is necessarily interpreted as a difference among adults, not between adults and youth.

Parent-child continuities and discontinuities. In a review of the literature on adolescent socialization, Campbell (1971) efficiently summarizes the *joint* implications of these studies:

> There is overwhelming evidence of congruity between, illustratively, parents' social class and the social class of the adolescent's date and friends; between parents' frequency of church attendance, or their religious belief systems, and the religious condition of the adolescent; between parents' education and adolescents' educational plans, aspirations, and performance; between the political party preferences and voting behavior of parents and their offspring; and between the racial views of parents and children. The list might be continued indefinitely. (p. 827)*

In other words, although there are usually some preference differences--and certainly arguments--between adolescents and their parents (see

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*Three examples of specific recent studies to the same effect are as follows: In a cross-cultural study of Danish and American parent-adolescent pairs, Kandell et al. found that adolescent agreement with parents on general life values was greater in both countries than was agreement among peers. As the discussion of political activists below shows, there are ideological and activist continuities between politically active youth and their parents. The *National Longitudinal Study* (1975) found that almost exactly the same number of male and female adolescents expected to attend graduate school as indicated that their parents wanted them to attend graduate school.

discussion of peer group, below), there seems to be major continuity between parents and their children in values and expectations.

Generational continuities and discontinuities. Prior to looking at the evidence, we would expect at least some discontinuities between youth and older generations. As Mannheim (1952) points out, it is only in static or slowly changing societies that new generations evolve out of old generations without visible cleavage. In this society, characterized by rapid social change, discontinuities between generations are inevitable. Moreover, as indicated above, there is more age segregation today between age groups. Just as breeding isolates cause species differentiation, increased social isolation increases cultural differentiation. However, this is a process that would be expected to--and does--affect all age groups, not just youth. For example, the elderly exhibit increasingly distinct behavior patterns, such as unique gathering places and interest group behaviors. The question thus becomes whether adolescent patterns are more distinct from those of other age groups than the patterns of those groups are distinct from each other.

In theory, it is possible to determine the extent to which the characteristics of the culture of one age group overlap those of the culture of another age group. In practical terms, it is impossible to compare two cultures on all characteristics and, unfortunately, the Martin and Coleman reports do not specify those patterns that should be counted as most significant for the question of "disconnection." In the absence of such specification, the nature of adolescent developmental processes would lead us to expect that adolescents would appropriate or invent more distinct cultural characteristics than other age groups. They are in the process of forming identities; they are coming to recognize that the self can be transformed; and the arrival of puberty is forcing them to cope with new impulses, new problems of conscience, and new social expectations. These processes can be expected to result in a rapid "trying on" of new behaviors that differ from those of adult age groups.

However, whether or not youth culture has more unique characteristics than the cultures of other age groups, the important issue is

their significance for issues such as "cultural continuity." The most flamboyant characteristics of youth culture tend to be items of manners and taste--in fact the term "youth culture" is often used to refer to just these items. Adults can and have treated these items seriously--e.g., expelling youth from school for having long hair. However, it can be asked whether treating those items as significant might only reflect on the balance and perspective of adults. The adult reaction sometimes looks like an instance of the domino theory--long hair as the first stop on the road to perdition. The more basic question about cultural distinctness would seem to be about the similarity or difference in *values*--e.g., values about work, religion, sex roles, sexuality, drug use, politics, and crime and public order.

Answering the question of youth-adult value differences involves data and interpretation problems. Minimally, we need comparable data for adolescents of different time periods. Optimally, we need comparable data for different age groups at several different points in time. We have bits of both kinds of data, but nothing close to an adequate data base. The second problem is deciding what kinds of data validly indicate an individual's values. Social scientists tend to treat people's *attitudes* about something as indicating their values. However, specific attitudes tend to be very sensitive to immediate context--of both the survey question itself and historical fluctuations.* Moreover, the implications of attitude differences between

*For example, the Yankelovich surveys of college youth from 1969 to 1973 show the following shifts in attitudes: 43 percent (in 1973) would welcome more acceptance of sexual freedom; 38 percent (1969) to 28 percent (1973) saw religion as a very important value; 35 percent (1969) to 19 percent (1973) saw patriotism as a very important value; 64 percent (1969) to 77 percent (1973) saw challenge of the job as an important job criterion; 33 percent (1969) to 58 percent (1973) saw economic security as an important job criterion; 36 percent (1969) to 61 percent (1973) saw money that you can earn as an important job criterion. These are large percentage shifts in a four-year period. We would expect the cohort of youth interviewed in 1973 to be different from that interviewed in 1969. Thus, the shifts could be attributed to a *generational* effect. However, the historical context had also changed: the Vietnam war was over, and the recession had started. Thus, the shifts could also be attributed to historical fluctuations.

adolescent and adult cohorts for long-term social continuity or discontinuity are unclear. In these circumstances, it is sensible to wait for more data points before trying to interpret the difference.

Against these caveats, we briefly address the values of youth and adults on questions of work, drugs, premarital sexual behavior, political activism, and religious commitment.

Work Attitudes. The Yankelovich (1973) survey of college youth found that 81 percent accepted the statement that, "commitment to a meaningful career is a very important part of a person's life." As observed earlier, the *National Longitudinal Study* (1975) of high school seniors in 1972 found that 84 percent considered "success in my line of work" as being important and that more seniors rated this item as very important than any of the other nine items. Although a study of college youth in 1972 found that students perceived themselves as less concerned with money and job security than their fathers (Gottlieb), the Yankelovich survey results for 1968 to 1973 show that money and job security are becoming increasingly important--probably as the result of the current economic recession. Specifically, Yankelovich found that the percentage of youth who considered making money important increased from 36 percent in 1969 to 61 percent in 1973, that the size of the career-minded group increased from 55 percent in 1968 to 66 percent in 1973, and that the percentage who thought economic security was important increased from 33 percent in 1970 to 58 percent in 1973.

Even if we had data that showed clear differences between contemporary youth and their parents on work values, interpreting the difference would require, minimally, knowledge of the work attitudes of contemporary parents when they were adolescents. Work attitudes may be affected by life-stages, since the economic responsibilities of adolescents and adults are very different.

Drug Use and Attitudes. Attitudes about drug use and actual drug use differ between adults and youth, although, empirically, the major difference in values and usage seems to occur only for marijuana. In 1972, the incidence of marijuana use was 4 percent among 12- to 13-year-olds, 10 percent among 14- to 15-year-olds, 29 percent among 16- to 17-

year-olds, 55 percent among 18- to 21-year-olds, 40 percent among 22- to 25-year-olds, 20 percent among 26- to 34-year-olds, 6 percent among 35- to 49-year-olds, and 2 percent among those 50 years old and older (National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse). College freshmen increasingly support repeal of the laws prohibiting the use of marijuana, from 22.8 percent in 1969, to 45.8 percent in 1970, to 51.5 percent in 1972. We do not have comparable data on adult attitudes toward the marijuana laws.

Table 1 reports drug use for a nationally representative sample of males in the year after high school in 1970. The table shows sharp differences in use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana versus all other illegal drugs. Only 1.1 percent of this sample frequently used (once or twice a week or nearly every day) amphetamines, barbituates, heroin, or hallucinogens (Johnston). About 50 percent regularly used cigarettes, a little less than 50 percent regularly used alcohol, and about 10 percent regularly used marijuana. Although we do not have comparable data for adult use, adults could not be significantly more conservative in the use of illegal drugs other than marijuana than this youth sample. It is doubtful that this sample regularly used alcohol and cigarettes more frequently than adults.

The same study collected data on male youth's *attitudes* toward drug use, revealing the same patterns as for actual drug use. The majority of the sample disapproved or strongly disapproved of heavy cigarette smoking and regular use of marijuana, and approximately 85 percent disapproved of the regular use of LSD, heroin, barbituates, and amphetamines.

The major difference in drug use and attitudes toward drug use between youth and adults probably occurs for marijuana. According to very recent data, marijuana is becoming still more popular among youth--as of spring 1975, incidence of marijuana use was 6 percent for 12- to 13-year-olds and 22 percent for 14- to 15-year-olds. Marijuana use seems to be becoming a somewhat permanent characteristic of youth culture. Whether it will eventually be accepted by adults or remain restricted to the youth culture is not known.

Table 1

DRUG USE DURING THE YEAR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL*

How often have you done this during part or all of the last year for other than medical reasons?	Percentage Frequencies			
	Frequently	Rarely	Never	% Missing Data
(a) Smoked cigarettes	48.4	19.4	32.2	1.6
(b) Used alcoholic beverages (liquor, beer, wine)	43.8	44.7	11.4	1.8
(c) Smoked marijuana (pot, grass) or hashish	9.5	24.7	65.7	1.3
(d) Taken amphetamines, barbituates, heroin, or hallucinogens	1.1	7.9	90.9	1.7

*From Johnston, 1973, p. 35.

Premarital Sexual Behavior. The youth of the 1960s accelerated a secular trend toward more permissive premarital sexual conduct. Comparable surveys of undergraduates in 1958 and 1968 showed that rates of premarital coitus for males remained the same (about 50 percent), but increased for females. In a Yankelovich survey (1969), more parents than youth agreed that premarital sexual relations are morally wrong, but Table 2 shows that attitudes of all age groups are changing with regard to this behavior. There is evidence that these attitudes are affected be responsibilities associated with life-stage: a survey of college students showed that 75 percent favored intercourse for college women, but only 45 percent favored intercourse for their own, hypothetical, twenty-year old daughters (Davis, 1972).

Table 2

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS AGREEING THAT "PREMARITAL SEX IS WRONG"*

Age Group	1969	1973	Absolute Change	Relative Change
Under 30	49	29	-20	-41
30-49	67	44	-23	-34
Over 50	80	64	-16	-20

*Source: Bengston and Starr, p. 240.

Political Activism. Youth of the 1960s were clearly more politically active and more leftist in political orientation than youth of the 1940s or 1950s, although not necessarily more so than youth of the 1930s. As argued above, the initial activism seems more produced by, than productive of, the general social liberalism of the early 1960s. Given the history of the early 1960s, the confrontations of the late 1960s were not particularly surprising--at least in retrospect. The Vietnam War was in marked contrast to that vision of the world represented by the civil rights movement, President Kennedy's Peace Corps, and President Johnson's War on Poverty; youth were required to fight the war; the activism was there; and the organizational models (e.g.,

protest marches) were there. Moreover, the college militants of the 1960s typically came from homes in which parents were politically liberal and exhibited a high interest in politics. These youth were expressing moral principles and underlying values learned in the home (Braungart).* In other words, even youth who seemed alien to adult society were acting out the values characteristic of an adult subgroup, usually those of their parents.

Youth of the 1970s are not evidencing the same activism and, by 1972, college youth were reporting decreasing leftist political orientations (American Council on Education). Thus, adolescent political behavior of the 1960s does not look as though it is going to become either a characteristic of the adolescent life-stage or even a secular trend. It seems to have been a response to historical events, although the "Vietnam Generation" itself may be affected throughout its life-cycle--e.g., in attitudes toward government and war.

Religious Commitment. There is a secular trend toward a decline in traditional religious commitment across age groups. To the extent that the decline in youth's religious commitment is greater than would be expected from the overall trend, a study that investigates youth's religious values and political activity over the last 20 years is relevant. The study (Hastings and Hoge) indicates an inverse relationship between the two: as political activity increases, religious commitment seems to decline--and vice versa. In this case, any greater-than-expected change in religious commitment might be attributed to the political activism of a particular historical period.

As indicated, there are problems with testing the concept that youth are alienated from adult society. The reports do not specify how the phenomenon, if it exists, should manifest itself, and even if they did, we would probably not have the appropriate data to test the idea carefully. However, the data fragments examined here raise

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*For example, a study in the Chicago area showed that activists *and* non-activists were closer to their fathers than to each other on every issue posed, including the bombing of North Vietnam, civil disobedience in civil rights protests, Lyndon Johnson, and the full socialization of industry (Flacks).

questions either about what the reports mean by "disconnection" or about whether the phenomenon exists beyond sometimes startling differences in taste and manners. The literature on parental-youth continuities and discontinuities indicates that any major differences that might exist between youth and older generations are more apt to be differences *within* the adult group, which are being manifested in the youth group, than between parents and their adolescent children.

Increased Age Segregation → Increased Peer Association. Even if peer association has increased among adolescents, we are still faced with the problem of assessing its immediate and long-term consequences for youth. Thus, we will entertain the statement that peer association has increased in order to assess its significance for adolescents.

The reports seem to be concerned about two things: (1) the prolonged dependence of adolescents--i.e., they want youth to be more independent; and (2) increases in peer association because of its implications for the loss of adult control over the process by which children enter adulthood--i.e., they want more youth association with adults and less with peers. *If the reports are using "adults" to refer either to parents or to parental surrogates,* (e.g., teachers or college presidents), the evidence indicates that the reports have inconsistent objectives.

All major stages in the life-cycle seem to pose challenges unique to that stage. An individual's successful resolution of those challenges seems to affect no only his "comfortableness" in that stage, but also his ability to handle the problems of subsequent stages. As indicated earlier, the adolescent stage apparently requires the development of a new ego synthesis and consolidation of a self identity.

The "sense of self" being consolidated in this stage should provide the psychological basis for the *autonomous* functioning required of adulthood. As Campbell (1971) observes, consolidating a sense of "autonomous self" is difficult to do within the traditionally dependent and subservient child-parent relationship.* Adolescents seem to need

*Adolescents' verbal rejection of parents and their increasing time commitment to peers outside the home may seem inconsistent with the evidence on value and expectation continuity between parents and

to put distance between themselves and adult authority figures in order to negotiate this process satisfactorily. Heavy investments in peer relationships provide one relational "terrain" in which this can be done.

Data from an empirically based, extensive study of the adolescent experience (Douvan and Adelson) are consistent with this theory of adolescent development.* The study shows that adolescents who have *fewer* ties to peers evidence *less* autonomy. It also shows that, relative to less ambitious males, more ambitious males show more confidence and competence, by definition have accepted the traditional American value of bettering themselves, and seem better prepared to function effectively in the adult world. In other words, the more ambitious males evidence the kind of progress toward adulthood that the reports seem to want. However, *ambitious males evidence more ties to peers.* They are more apt to reject parents per se (more disagreements with parents, less frequent choice of a family member as adult ideal, less reliance on parental advice), but also more apt to accept adults per se and adult roles (more frequent choice of unrelated adult as adult ideal, much less frequent choice of no adult as adult ideal, more apt to choose assuming adult roles as a source of self-esteem, less apt to choose peer acceptance as a source of self-esteem).

In other words, male adolescents who associate more intensively with peers and reject their parents more, but identify more with adults and adulthood, are better prepared for the adult world. *They seem to use the peer group to dissociate from parents, but not from adulthood.*

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adolescents (see last section). We suggest that what adolescents are attacking is parental authority, not their basic values and expectations. In other words, conflicts are part of a process of "letting go" and "getting free," not of negation.

*The analysis is based on a nationally representative sample of 1925 females in grades 6-12, regardless of age, and 1045 males, aged 14-16 in grades 7-12. Although the study was published in 1966, it is based on data collected on males in 1955 and on females in 1956. Thus, the data are 20 years old, and it can be argued that they are not relevant to contemporary adolescents. However, the study concentrates on basic *patterns* of adolescent development. Contemporary adolescent response frequencies to the same questions would undoubtedly be different than those for adolescents in the 1950s. However, it is not clear that the cultural conditions producing the 1950s *patterns* of adolescent development have changed sufficiently to produce change in the patterns themselves.

In summary, the evidence suggests that more adolescent autonomy and more adult socializing influence over adolescents are inconsistent objectives if "adult" is defined as parents or other adult authority figures. However, it also shows that more autonomous adolescents are positively oriented toward adulthood and adults per se. This suggests that adults in a position to enter into friend and equality relations with adolescents might be acceptable and helpful to adolescents.

In thinking about relative peer and parental influences, several other miscellaneous comments should be kept in mind. First, the literature on child development indicates that the years *before* adolescence are the most important for determining an individual's standards of behavior. In other words, parents have considerably more influence than peers over a child in those years that seem to matter most.

Second, parental influence is usually defined as representing the influence for self-control and morality. This ignores the fact that peer groups can insist on self-controls that an adolescent's family does not require. For example, peers may be less apt to tolerate shows of pique and petulance and demand more evidence of thoughtfulness and tact than the individual's family.

Third, parents themselves, especially middle-class parents, often *encourage* peer influence by expecting their children to become popular with peers and by judging their children's "adjustment" by the extent of their popularity. In this case, adolescents who associate extensively with peers are simply following parental directives.

Fourth, as indicated above, peer opinion seems to be most authoritative in those areas that adults do not consider "at stake." Adolescents are allowed more latitude in areas of taste and manners, but with regard to central values, adolescents seem to be fairly responsive to parental standards.

Before leaving the problem of peer and parental influence, we should address the question of peer group effects on two special groups: juvenile delinquents and youthful protesters. The Martin report links increased peer group association with juvenile delinquency and, especially in the Coleman report, there seems to be an underlying concern with rebellious, protesting youth.

Although serious delinquents are a small proportion of any adolescent cohort, the increase in juvenile delinquency seems to be a trend and one with major social costs. Thus, it is important to determine whether any increase in peer group influence accounts for the increase in delinquency. While delinquents often act in peer groups, it is not clear that peer groups are a *cause* of delinquency or that an increase in peer influence is a cause of increased delinquency.

The campus protests of the 1960s seemed to have been provoked by secular fluctuations--a socially liberal political environment and the Vietnam war. It is not at all clear that increased peer group influence accounts for these protests. They seem to have been mobilized by the group that Douvan and Adelson suggest is atypical and always present in adolescent cohorts--disaffected upper-middle-class adolescents. The support they received can easily be interpreted as interest group behavior under conditions of a morally uncertain war, rather than as increased peer group influence.

Disconnected Youth Culture → Increased Inter-generational Hostility. The Martin and Coleman reports also link an assumed disconnected youth culture with increased inter-generational hostilities. Social science theory certainly predicts a higher probability of conflict between differentiated age groups (e.g., Davis, 1966). However, unless youth are more differentiated from other age groups than other age groups are from each other, we have no reason to expect more hostility between youth and other age groups than exists between any other groups. It is also true that all social systems, regardless of structural arrangements, are characterized by tension between chronologically adjacent generations, especially between the males of those two generations. The tension derives from problems of control, power, and replacement--the younger males' fear of the superior power of older males and older males' fear of social and sexual replacement by younger males.*

*There may be more inter-generational tension in industrialized societies when a generation advances through adolescence than in non-industrialized societies. This difference is partly attributable to the fact that the social status of youth in Western societies is ambiguous. Western youth acquire adult prerogatives gradually over a period

However, the question is not whether there is inter-generational tension, but whether inter-generational tension within this society has recently increased as a function of adult-youth disconnection. A decision that inter-generational hostility seems to have increased should depend on a *pattern* of increase, not on an occasional shift in the data attributable to secular fluctuations, such as the Vietnam war.*

The first problem in trying to discern a pattern of increased hostility is to decide which perceptions and behaviors indicate hostility. Anthropologists traditionally treat deviant acts (e.g., theft or violation of fishing rights) as indicating inter-group hostility. Thus, changes in criminal statistics can be used as indicators of changes in inter-group hostilities. In our case, an increase in criminal acts by youth toward adults or by adults toward youth would indicate an increase in *inter-generational* hostility. Unfortunately, we have only scattered data that relate age of victim and age of offender by type of crime.

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of years, not simultaneously. Whenever statuses are ambiguous in a social group, conflict and tension between members can be expected (Heinicke and Bales; Bales and Slater).

However, to argue that this sort of inter-generational tension can be reduced if youth acquired adult prerogatives simultaneously seems quixotic. As indicated earlier, puberty may arrive earlier for post-industrialized youth, but making intelligent occupational, educational, and marital choices also requires emotional and social maturity. The latter seems related to experience, which is related to age. Giving youth power over--and, consequently, responsibility for--educational, marital, and occupational choices simultaneously with the arrival of physiological adulthood does not seem advisable. However, it does seem desirable to give young people power and responsibility in situations with retrievable consequences.

*To the extent that adult perceptions of increased inter-generational hostility derive from the radical, anti-adult rhetoric of the late 1960s, it is useful to recall the association of that rhetoric with a war that heavily affected the youth of the period. It is also wise to recall the estimated size of the radical group, even during the war. As Braungart observes, "Estimates of hard-core membership in all radical groups comprising the youth movement rarely exceeded 5 percent of the total student body in this country at any one time throughout the last decade..." (p. 268). Five percent of adolescents in college represents approximately 2 percent of the total adolescent cohort of college age.

In both 1960 and 1971, male and female youth aged 18 years and under accounted for large proportions of arrests for serious crimes. with the rates increasing slightly for males and substantially for females. However, if youth are over-represented in arrests for serious crimes, they are also over-represented as victims, especially in the 16- to 19-year-old group (see Table 3). This age group is victimized twice as frequently as the general population 12 years and older. Since youth are over-represented among victims, their over-representation among arrests may indicate nothing about inter-generational hostility. People tend to victimize those proximate to them--kin, neighbors, and age peers with whom they associate.

In estimating inter-generational hostility, we might also fruitfully look at data on feelings of closeness between parents and youth. We have only very limited data, restricted to adolescent feelings toward parents, for tenth-grade males only, and without a time series comparison (Bachman). These data do not reveal any particular evidence of hostility. Sixty-five percent feel very close to their fathers; only 27 percent feel fairly close or not very close. The percentages for mothers are 79 percent and 18 percent, respectively. Fourteen percent do not want to be like or very much like their fathers; 80 percent want to be very much, somewhat, or a little like him. The percentages for mothers are 13 percent and 83 percent, respectively. Without time series data, we cannot estimate the stability or change in feelings such as these.

Conclusions

This evaluation of the reports' theories of youth has been partial--many relevant data either do not exist or were not accessible to us within the scope of this study. However, this partial review raises serious questions about the reports' theories. The labor statistics for youth suggest that their entry into adulthood is less delayed than the reports indicate. The presumed negative consequences of delay are not supported, and the reports do not give adequate consideration of the possible benefits of delay. There does seem to be more age segregation today, but this is true of all age groups. There also do not

Table 3

CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS AGED 12 YEARS AND OLDER (per 1000): 1973*

Type of Victimization	All Ages, 12 and older	16-19 Years	20-24 Years
Rape	0.5	1.4	1.4
Robbery with injury	1.2	1.9	1.9
Robbery without injury	2.3	3.2	3.9
Aggravated assault	5.1	11.9	10.3
Simple assault	8.1	17.2	13.8
Personal larceny	46.7	86.5	66.7
Total	64.0	122.1	98.0

*SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, LEAA, National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service.

seem to be major disjunctures in adult and youth values--although there are in matters of taste. Even if there is increased peer association, this association may be more instrumental than detrimental to the development of the adolescent.

We do not find the reports' theories of youth particularly compelling, and their underlying sense of *danger* seems misplaced. However, we have some sympathy with their sense of "missed opportunities." Even though all age groups have to cope with a more complicated, confusing, and impersonal world, this does not mean that the institutions that serve youth cannot help them prepare better for the major responsibilities that face them--their education, occupations, marriages, and parenting.

OMISSIONS FROM THE REPORTS

As indicated in the introduction to this section, the reports implicitly define adolescents as male, white, and broadly middle-class. They do not examine adolescent problems or propose solutions in terms of variation by race, sex, and social class. Surprisingly, they also pay little attention to two other questions. They essentially ignore an adolescent behavior that might be emerging as a major social problem--delinquency. They also do not look at data that sociologists and anthropologists traditionally examine to determine if a group is in social or psychological "integrational" trouble--data on suicides, abandonments (e.g., runaways), mental illness, alcoholism, and drug use. The rest of this subsection comments briefly on these omissions.

Race*

Relative to white youth, black youth are more likely to live in central cities, more likely to live in the South, and less likely to

*In this discussion, as well as what follows on sex and social class, two points should be borne in mind. First, there is considerable variation between members of any sociological category. For example, on certain dimensions, blacks and whites attending Northern integrated schools are much more like each other than blacks attending Northern integrated schools are like blacks attending Southern segregated schools. Second, behaviors that differentiate the members of one group from those

live in the North and West. They are more likely to come from a large family and one with a low income, more apt to come from an impoverished family, more likely to come from a female-headed household, more likely to have a working mother, and more likely to have at least one person dependent on them for financial support. Their fathers are more likely to be poorly educated, and they are less likely to have educational items in the home. They are more apt to be in vocational or technical than in academic programs in high school, and more apt to think that more emphasis should be placed on basic academic subjects. They are less apt to think that they have control over their environment. They are more apt to want a job that is looked up to by others, which allows them to make a lot of money, and which gives them a chance to be a leader. They are less likely to be employed, particularly from the ages 16 to 19. They are less likely to register to vote and less likely to vote if registered. They are more likely to be the victims of violent crimes, but less likely or as likely to be the victims of theft. They are slightly more likely to be in jail (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975a, *National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). Data on male adolescents only show that black males are as likely to report good family relationships and delinquent behaviors (Bachman).

Tentative data on male drug use shows that black youth have higher drug use rates than white youth during high school for marijuana, amphetamines, barbituates, and heroin. However, in the year after high school, blacks maintain or reduce use of all of the more serious illegal drugs, whereas whites increase their use of the serious illegal drugs (Johnston).

Differences between black and white youth are, to some extent, attributable to social class differences and, in estimating the effects of policies for blacks, it is important to differentiate between poor and middle-class blacks. It is also important to remember that black

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of another (e.g., females versus males) represent responses to the different *situations* that those individuals experience--e.g., females and males are socialized very differently. As differences between group situations disappear, we can expect behavioral differences between the groups themselves to disappear. For example, to the extent that parents raise female as well as male children to believe that they can be doctors, we can expect female youth to choose medical school more frequently.

people in America are in the long process of moving from an oppressed to an equal people within the society. Black youth are most able to take advantage of the new options; but, because of the social process in which they are involved, they are most vulnerable to value conflicts and identity confusions. Contemplated policies should therefore be evaluated for their effects on these special difficulties.

Sex

There appear to be large differences in the adolescent experience for males and females (Douvan and Adelson). Males focus on a vocational future, and their style is practical and instrumental. Females focus on the interpersonal aspects of future life--marriage and motherhood. Their style has more fantasy--which makes sense when it is recognized that what females become has less to do with their instrumental acts and more to do with the men they marry. Females have a more compliant relationship with parents, identify more with parental standards, and are less *openly* troubled by control of sexual impulses. While males seek more direct expression of their sexuality, adolescent females tend to diffuse their erotic needs through a series of different interpersonal ties.

The issue of independence--the urge to be free--appears to be primarily characteristic of males. Up to the age of 18, females show no great need for independence from family, and less need to confront authority. The place of the peer group in the process of detachments from family consequently differs for males and females. Males more often have allegiance to the peer group as such, seeing it as a coherent band offering support to its members and having an authority of its own. Females are not as tied to the group as such and are more attracted to close two-person friendships. Females use the peer group to develop intimate connections with other females and with males, thus forming identity. Males use it for disconnecting, thus forming identity.

Recent data on adolescents (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975) find male and female differences consistent with these patterns. For example, in rating factors important in career selection, females gave more stress to: opportunities to be helpful to others and useful to

society; opportunities to work with people rather than things; work that seemed important and interesting; and work that allowed contact with friendly, sociable people. They gave less emphasis than males to job prestige, freedom from supervision, making a lot of money, good income to start, chance to be a leader, and opportunity for promotion and advancement.

Until adults have more similar expectations for male and female children, we can expect these differences in the male and female adolescent experience to continue. In the meantime, the reports' views about work opportunities, peer group pressure, and rejection of parental norms are more relevant to male than to female adolescents.

Social Class

The lower a youth's socioeconomic class, the more likely it is that the adolescent will come from a large family, from a home broken by divorce, from a farm or rural area, and from a racial minority. He is apt to have poorer relations with his parents, perform more poorly in school, have less vocabulary skill and lower reading comprehension, have less information about jobs, have a lower self-concept of school ability, have more negative school attitudes, have lower self-esteem, have less sense that he controls his own fate, exhibit more rebellious behavior in school, exhibit more somatic symptoms, have lower occupational aspirations, and have less expectation of attending college (Bachman). For middle-class youth, we can argue about whether entry to adult roles is properly or excessively delayed. However, for poor youth, the problem is more apt to be not enough delay--if anything, these youth tend to assume family and work responsibilities too soon.

In other words, an adolescent from the lower socioeconomic classes is at a considerable disadvantage. Any policy intervention for adolescents should be carefully examined to make sure that at least it does not increase the problems of economically disadvantaged youth. (See Section V for a discussion of possible tradeoffs between equity and dispersion and individualization policies.)

Delinquency

The reports virtually ignore one of the most serious social problems associated with youth: delinquent behavior. Table 4 shows the contribution of youth to serious crime in the United States. Youth under 25 years of age represent between 44 and 84 percent of the arrests for all categories of serious crimes. Perhaps youth are more likely to be arrested for crimes they do or do not commit than older individuals; nevertheless, youth seem to account for substantial amounts of crime committed in this country. Except for auto theft, the incidence has increased for all categories of serious crime between 1960 and 1971 for youth under 18 years.

Several relationships between delinquency and other characteristics of youth are worth noting. In a nationally representative sample of tenth-grade males in 1966, the better a boy got along with his family, the less delinquency he reported.* For this study, delinquency was not related either to race or socioeconomic class (Bachman). From data collected from the same sample of males in 1970, a high relationship was found between incidence of delinquency and drug use. The highly delinquent were considerably more likely to become users of drugs in high school than those who were not delinquent, but becoming a user of illegal drugs did not seem to lead to any important increase in delinquency (Johnston).** Although school dropouts often engage in delinquent behaviors, delinquent behavior usually precedes dropping out, rather than the reverse. Thus, attempts to lower delinquency rates by lowering dropout rates do not promise to have much effect (Bachman, Green, and Wirtanen).

Indicators of Psycho-Social Pathology

Sociologists and anthropologists treat certain behaviors as signaling an individual's alienation--from himself, his social group (e.g.,

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*This finding is consistent with the results of the Glueck and Glueck study on predicting delinquency (1950).

**As the author notes, this relationship probably does not hold for addicts, who are usually forced to crime to support their drug use.

Table 4

ARRESTS OF YOUTH--PERCENTAGE AND FREQUENCY (IN THOUSANDS) OF TOTAL ARRESTS FOR SERIOUS CRIMES FOR 1960 AND 1971

Offense	Males under 18		Females under 18		Individuals under 25
	1960	1971	1960	1971	1971
Serious Crimes	42.6 (176,451)	44.1 (334,418)	35.8 (17,435)	42.8 (66,545)	76.0
Murder, non-negligent manslaughter	8.5 (331)	12.1 (1,068)	3.3 (27)	6.1 (100)	44.1
Negligent manslaughter	7.8 (131)	9.4 (125)	3.1 (6)	16.3 (27)	45.3
Forcible rape	17.4 (1,192)	21.1 (2,359)	NA	NA	64.1
Robbery	24.4 (7,565)	32.7 (24,522)	23.8 (375)	38.0 (1,968)	76.9
Aggravated assault	12.4 (5,787)	17.4 (14,024)	8.1 (664)	20.2 (2,636)	47.5
Burglary-breaking and entering	46.4 (51,604)	49.3 (93,528)	43.2 (1,617)	45.8 (4,420)	83.3
Larceny	48.9 (78,436)	50.8 (154,425)	42.0 (13,493)	45.3 (54,687)	78.0
Auto theft	60.4 (31,405)	51.1 (44,367)	62.9 (1,253)	47.1 (2,707)	84.2

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1973*, Table 245, p. 153.

his family, school mates, work group, community, or tribe), or both. Such behaviors are running away from parents, spouse, or children; excessive use of legal or illegal drugs, including alcohol; mental illness; suicide; and criminal acts. Youth would seem to be in "integrational" trouble if rates of these behaviors were increasing, relative either to adults or to youth in earlier decades. We know that comtemporary adolescents show increasing rates for all of these behaviors. For example, suicide rates for 15- to 24-year-olds have more than doubled from 1950 (4.5 per 100,000 population) to 1973 (10.9 per 100,000 population), approaching the rate for all ages of 12.5 per 100,000 population. We need to know the rates for the population by age for a range of pathological behaviors, and it would be desirable to know rates across time periods longer than 20 years. For example, although suicide rates increased for adolescents from 1950 to 1973, what were those rates in the 1930s? In other words, do we have some sort of increasing secular trend in pathological behaviors, or do they increase in response to certain social events and decrease in response to others?

If such data show a long-term increase in adolescent pathology, it would still be difficult to establish cause and invent solutions. These signs of alienation and lack of "binding" to the social group are usually interpreted as indicating problems with the fundamental institutions of the society--e.g., the family, the economy, the church, the community. Problems this basic are often difficult to affect with specific policy solutions. A solution might be to get people to concern themselves more with each other--thus providing both emotional support for one another and social control over one another's behavior. However, how would we make this a "policy," let alone get it implemented?

Regardless of the problems with cause and solution, it is important to "track" indicators of psycho-social pathology for all age groups, including youth. At the very least, this knowledge provides a context in which to assess other events.

CONCLUSIONS

We have not reviewed all points made by the Coleman and Martin reports and have not even thoroughly reviewed those assumptions we did address.* We used easily accessible data and literature and tried to show fruitful ways to evaluate the validity of assumptions about youth.

The major, obviously tentative, conclusion is that many things "are not as they seemed"--either to the reports' authors or ourselves. Many youth have at least partial entry into the adult world at ages earlier than the reports suggest, and delayed entry seems to be helpful to youth in ways undeveloped by the reports. Desire for change and identity with the underdog seems to be more historical fluctuation than trend--and, at that, restricted to a small proportion of youth. Impaired assumption of adult responsibilities appears to be more fear than reality. Age segregation is probably greater now than in earlier decades, although there may be more vicarious and real interaction across age groups than the reports suggest. There seems to be continuity between parents and their adolescent children in basic values and expectations. There seems to be a disjuncture between adult and youth cultures in matters of taste, but considerably less in questions of values. Fears of a nation separated by age into culturally alien groups do not seem well founded. Although there may be more interaction among contemporary adolescents than among their nineteenth-century counterparts, peer relations seem instrumental to adolescent development. At what point these relations become "excessive"--and for which adolescents--is not clear. The idea of increased inter-generational hostility could not be tested satisfactorily. To the extent that the authors developed this idea in response to the anti-adult outbreaks of the 1960s, it seems to have been a historical fluctuation.

We see the omissions from the reports as serious. Increasing rates of delinquency are a reality, and carry danger for both perpetrator and victim. The reports' policy recommendations run the risk of being inequitable (see Section V) in that they do not recognize the variations

*The reports' theories depended partly on an assumption that several things had gotten worse. The time series data used to assess such ideas often do not exist or are not readily available.

among youth--as represented in being raised a boy rather than a girl, being born black rather than white, or being born poor rather than wealthy.

The reports' sense of danger seems to be more chimera than reality--the sometimes frightening behaviors of youth in the 1960s seem to have been restricted to that period and to small proportions of the total adolescent cohort. As indicated earlier, we have sympathy with the reports' sense of "missed opportunities." There are missed opportunities for all age groups, but this does not mean that we should not try to reduce those that affect youth. Adolescence is fundamentally a time of choice--choice of education, occupationl life style, and marriage. Tinkering with our institutions will not buy youth productive lives, happy marriages, and lovely children. However, institutions can probably do more than they now are in helping individuals to identify where they do have control and to determine the immediate and long-term consequences of exercising that control in different ways. This means giving youth more chances to "try things on" without having to buy--chances, for example, to learn the range of outcomes associated with early marriage and with delayed marriage; to learn the markets for youth with trade school backgrounds versus general college versus professional school training; to learn their responses to a variety of actions--making, thinking, deciding, comforting, or communicating. Programs to help youth try on options must keep in mind the different limitations and possibilities of different categories of adolescents. What is stagnation for one adolescent may be security for another; what is an unmitigated mistake for one adolescent may be the least of the evils for another; what is growth for one is repetition for another.

III. YOUTH, SCHOOLS, AND THE LABOR MARKET

(Anthony H. Pascal)

When we discuss schools as vehicles for facilitating the passage of young people into states of economic self-sufficiency, we are perforce thinking of them as "preparatory" institutions. The focus is on the downstream consequences: the events that will occur later in the life of people who are now students. In this context, schooling is considered as part of the investment made to improve the economic life-chances of students. The question then is: What sort of school experience most increases life-chance potential? We must also ask how the characteristics of the individual student and of different environments--economic, political, institutional, social--will affect the answers to these questions.

All of the reports being reviewed, particularly Coleman/PSAC, devote much attention to this preparatory aspect of schooling. In this chapter we will discuss the recommendations on the school-to-work transition and, in the process, ask five questions:

- Do the recommendations follow from the evidence and analysis presented in the reports themselves or in other studies?
- Do the recommendations give promise of remedying the problems the reports have identified?
- Are the recommendations administratively and politically feasible?
- What other policy suggestions seem appropriate?
- Are there still major gaps in what we need to know?

THE REPORTS' VIEW OF SCHOOL AND WORK

The idea that schools exist partly to prepare people for successful working lives is hardly new. Parents, when polled, persistently tend to respond that more schooling does and should lead to better jobs. In the last 20 years, economists have formalized this idea in the theory of *human capital*, in which education and training are viewed

as an investment in human beings that leads to higher productivity in work. It has been argued that, to the extent that employers compete for workers, those with higher productivities will earn more--i.e., self-investment pays off in the labor market.

The positive statistical relationship between years of schooling and lifetime income is hardly in dispute; what is subject to argument is the *reason* for the relationship. Some writers have argued that educational attainment is merely an indicator of a job applicant's docility or social status, and that these indeed are the attributes that interest employers (Berg; Levin; Thurow and Lucas). Others appear to demonstrate that schooling constitutes a good indication of future on-the-job productivity, a fact of which employers are well aware (Chiswick; Cain; Mincer, NBER, 1974). And, of course, the education/training process entails costs--at the very least in terms of alternative activities foregone--and this makes possible the calculation of "rates of return" for educational/training investments.

None of this is to deny that schools *may* do things other than occupational preparation--they educate the citizenry, socialize the young, assist in self-actualization, and preserve cultural standards. Nor is it to deny that jobs *may* yield rewards other than wages and fringe benefits--challenge, dignity, camaraderie, a sense of social contribution. Nor, finally, is it to deny that other factors also count for earning differentials among people, including training received outside of school, favoritism, social background, innate ability, individual tastes, luck, and the state of the economy. It is merely to argue that schooling does contribute to later economic performance and that many believe schooling could make a greater contribution if appropriately reformed.

Students, parents, education professionals, and the general public recognize that schooling is an expensive undertaking in terms of time, energy, and commitment, as well as in material resources. All are naturally inclined to want it to have sufficient returns as measured by the job success of former students, as well as along other important social dimensions.

Clearly, the contribution of schooling to downstream economic consequences should not obscure the fact that the educational system also has immediate consequences that are connected with the labor market. For example, some hold that if young people begin to feel that their educations are inadequate or irrelevant to their future careers, they will become alienated from school and, as if by contagion, from other social institutions (see, for example, Stinchcombe). Or, the converse may occur: young people may conclude that for them the educational investment does not have a sufficiently high yield, and they may drop out precisely so they can go to work. Dissatisfaction with school may foster attitudes--rebelliousness or passivity--that are long-lasting and may lead in turn to poorer long-term career prospects.

What follows is a brief synthesis of the main findings of the reports and a review of these findings in the light of evidence from recent studies.

More Young People Are in School and for Longer Periods of Time

All of the statistics bear this out. In 1940, of the 25 to 34 age group, 36 percent of white males, 41 percent of white females, 9 percent of black males, and 12 percent of black females had completed high school. In 1974, for the same age group, the percentages were 82, 81, 67, and 64 percent, respectively. In 1973, only 12 percent of all persons aged 14 to 24 years were neither high school graduates nor in school, and 93 percent of persons aged 14 to 17 years were enrolled in school (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1974). The fear that the escalation in average duration of schooling will continue unabated seems unfounded. In fact, the current decline in the economic value of schooling, abetted by the ending of the draft, seems to have already caused the expected response in enrollment rates at institutions of higher education, even in the face of an economy that offers poorer *immediate* employment prospects (Freeman, 1974a). In 1975, about 43 percent of all 18 and 19 year olds were enrolled in school, compared to about 50 percent in 1969 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975b). That is, young people are responding to realities. Of course, it is

true, as the figures cited show, that completing secondary education (i.e., through grade 12) is becoming the norm, even for groups that, in the recent past, had elevated high school drop-out rates.

Schools Insulate Young People from the World of Work

Students have always had considerable connections with work by means of part-time or seasonal jobs, and a larger fraction than before seem to be maintaining such connections. For youths in school, labor force participation has risen steadily throughout the post-war period, the rise being particularly large for females (see Table 5). Female *non*-students experienced similar increases in labor force participation, but the participation of younger male non-students (i.e., those aged 16 to 17 and 18 to 19) declined somewhat. Thus, there is *some* evidence of increasing labor market difficulty for younger men not in school. However, it should be noted that, in 1974, non-students were only 11 percent of all 16- to 17-year-old males and 54 percent of 18- to 19-year-old males (compared to 19 and 58 percent, respectively, in 1955).

For both sexes, the fraction of the youth population who held part-time jobs increased between 1957 and 1974; this was particularly the case for the younger age group (see Table 6). Full-time jobs were held by fairly constant fractions for both sexes among 18- to 24-year-olds (despite the fact that college enrollment was growing rapidly for the age group in this period). Full-time jobs also seemed to become more common for the youngest workers. In all these data, there is little indication of a declining commitment to work by the majority of young people.

The youth unemployment rate is typically high. The percentage of unemployed people under 24 averages between two and three times the percentage for all workers combined. But the recent increase in youth unemployment more or less mirrors what has been occurring for all workers and, in fact, the multiple seems to be declining as the recession recedes. Table 7 gives the ratio of the youth unemployment rate to the overall unemployment rate for young men and women for selected years.

Table 5

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE, BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, SEX, AND AGE
1948-1974

(Labor force participants as a percentage of total civilian non-institutional population)

School Status	Enrolled in School						Not Enrolled in School					
Sex	Male			Female			Male			Female		
Age	16-17	18-19	20-24	16-17	18-19	20-24	16-17	18-19	20-24	16-17	18-19	20-24
Year												
1948	na	28	27	na	14	23	na	96	96	na	59	46
1950	na	36	36	na	28	33	na	96	96	na	61	50
1955	37	44	42	21	28	42	88	95	97	47	62	49
1960	34	35	44	23	28	41	82	93	97	51	60	47
1965	37	36	49	26	29	40	81	91	96	43	63	62
1970	40	41	51	36	38	51	76	87	95	41	64	60
1974	43	45	56	39	40	56	78	90	95	54	69	66

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Handbook of Labor Statistics*, 1975, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, Table 11.

na = not available.

Table 6

WORK SCHEDULES OF YOUNG WORKERS BY SEX 1957-74

(Fraction of population on full-time schedules and on voluntary part-time schedules)

Sex	Males				Females			
Age	14 - 17		18 - 24		14 - 17		18 - 24	
Schedule	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Year								
1957	5	14	55	5	4	10	35	4
1960	5	13	54	6	4	11	34	5
1965	5	16	55	12	2	12	34	6
1970[a]	8	22	50	10	5	20	36	9
1974[a]	9	22	55	9	6	22	38	10

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Handbook of Labor Statistics*, 1975, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, Tables 10 and 22.

[a]For these years, the younger age group is 16-17 instead of 14-17.

Table 7

RATIO OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT TO OVERALL UNEMPLOYMENT BY AGE AND SEX

Year	Male			Female		
	Age: 16-17	18-19	20-24	16-17	18-19	20-24
1947	2.6	2.8	2.1	2.6	1.8	1.2
1950	2.6	2.4	1.6	2.5	1.7	1.2
1955	2.9	2.6	1.8	2.4	1.9	1.2
1960	2.9	2.8	1.6	2.6	2.2	1.4
1965	4.0	3.1	1.6	3.1	2.7	1.3
1970	3.5	2.8	1.9	2.9	2.4	1.3
1974	3.8	2.8	1.8	2.7	2.3	1.4
1975[a]	2.5	2.3	1.8	2.3	2.0	1.5

SOURCE: Manpower Report (1975).

[a]From *Employment and Earnings*, January 1976, Table A-36. Figures derived from seasonally adjusted rates for month of November.

The table demonstrates that it is only the youngest category of male workers for which the ratio had increased appreciably. And the rise was even more dramatic for black males aged 16 to 17. However, we must recognize that, over time, a growing fraction of 16- to 17-year-olds are in school and that part-time workers are generally subject to more unemployment (see also Flanagan).

Many economists now view the fraction of the labor force unemployed for a long period (15 weeks or more) as a more telling indicator of economic maladjustment. When we compare what fraction of the total of long-term unemployment is attributable to people under age 20, even between the boom year of 1964 and the recession year of 1974, we find that there has been virtually no change (Manpower Report, 1975, Table A-28).

These realities, which have nothing to do with the schools, exist in the face of a host of forces that would seem to mitigate against job-holding by the young, such as:

- The current softness in labor markets (a function both of recession-induced inadequate demand and the unprecedentedly large supplies of young workers resulting from the post-war baby boom).
- Laws and regulations that make employment for young people difficult.
- Employer and union discrimination against young workers.
- Public generosity and familial affluence, which tend to reduce youth's economic need for jobs.

Some have also argued that the skill requirements for entry-level jobs perennially escalate as production processes grow more sophisticated (Levine). Another notion often advanced (especially in the Coleman report) is that young workers are more isolated from adult co-workers than was the case in the past. Objective evidence for this point is difficult to come by: Kalachek (1967), for example, presents some evidence that teenage girls are concentrated in sales, service, and clerical jobs and in retail establishments, but no similar data for boys. If teenagers are increasingly being segregated into particular types of establishments (e.g., "fast-food" restaurants) or into certain

types of work within establishments, they are receiving little effective preparation for work and adulthood.

What is surprising about all this is that, in the face of a host of reasons why young persons should *not* be in the labor force, a larger fraction than ever of those in school have jobs, while those not in school are almost as likely as ever to be working. General unemployment and long-term unemployment trends for young workers reveal no important upward movement, except for the single category of very young males, especially black, during the recession. Most of the job-holding discussed here has very little to do with placement through the schools.

Despite Its Longer Duration, Schooling Now Has Less Economic Payoff and Leads to Poorer Career Adjustments

We must reemphasize the point that the decline in the economic value of schooling is probably chiefly the result of the forces just discussed, all of which militate against job-holding by the young. In addition, both cutbacks in government R&D spending and the slack demand for teachers which resulted from the fading away of the baby boom have appreciably reduced job opportunities for college graduates and have led college graduates to compete for jobs once thought to be the preserve of people without college degrees (Freeman, 1974a). In fact, the ratio of starting salaries of BAs as compared with those who hold high school diplomas only had droped from 1.5 in 1969 to less than 1.4 in 1973 (Freeman, 1974b, Table 3). These factors serve to reduce, at least temporarily, the economic worth of education, but they are independent of any change as purported in the quality or nature of schooling.

Significantly, the economic value of the education attained by minority students is steadily approaching that experienced by majority students (Smith and Welch), although the recent recession has slowed the rate of closure. Whether the gap between white and black rates of return will be completely eliminated depends on the continued decline in the school drop-out rates of blacks and a withering away of discrimination by employers, assuming similar distributions of innate

ability and motivation across races (Gilroy). Although sexual differences in the rate of return for education are not disappearing as rapidly, the average educational attainment (i.e., years of school completed) of both women and minorities is approaching that of white men. Thus, for some young people once considered "disadvantaged" in the labor market, the career value of education seems to have actually risen.

One may ask whether the alleged shortcomings of the schools have led to a decline in the psychological rewards of work as reflected in job satisfaction. We know, of course, that younger workers are, in general, less satisfied with their jobs than older workers. A good bit of this dissatisfaction is probably because they have worse jobs; experience and seniority tend to be rewarded in America--both in pay and in intrinsic benefits. But is there an upward trend, over time, in the fraction of young workers expressing dissatisfaction? No such trend is evident, according to a recent synthesis of the literature sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor (Quinn, p. 12). Perhaps maladjustment to work gets manifested not in direct expressions of dissatisfaction, but in reduced levels of job performance as measured by productivity,* turnover, and absenteeism. Time series analysis, however, reveals no trends over time that can be plausibly linked to job dissatisfaction. Neither is there evidence of links between dissatisfaction and accidents, tardiness, employee theft and sabotage, or labor force withdrawal in the data that have been studied (Quinn et al.).

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*Productivity, defined albeit simplistically as "output per person," has been rising over the post-war period. In real terms, it almost doubled between 1947 and 1974 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1975b, Table G-1). Although a substantial portion of the increase in productivity is due to ever larger endowments of physical capital per worker, even outside the manufacturing sector, where physical capital accumulation is perhaps less important, the increased real output per person over this period has been about 30 percent. And the "persons" being used as the denominators in these ratios are increasingly, over time, the products of the very schools being judged as ineffective.

CURRENT SCHOOL PRACTICES AND THE REPORTS' SUGGESTED REFORMS

In this section we attempt to sketch some of the programs and activities now in fairly wide use in secondary schools that are designed to ease the transition from school to work and we ask how well they are functioning. We then review the reforms proposed in the reports that are aimed at easing this same transition and speculate on:

- How significantly they depart from current practice,
- How feasible they are from the standpoint both of implementing them and of having adequate resources to cover their costs, and
- What their broader consequences are likely to be.

Where current knowledge has no answers to these questions, we describe the research needed for finding the answers.

First, by way of introduction, we list the recommendations of the three reports that deal most directly with the connection between schools and the labor market.

PANEL ON YOUTH, PRESIDENT'S SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (COLEMAN)

Alternation of School and Work

> "One way of providing youth with opportunities for acquiring experience in the assumption of responsibility and facilitating their contact with adults prior to the termination of education is to encourage movement between school and workplace. Some movement of this sort has recently come into being in career education programs, initiated by the schools or at the Federal level, and our proposal is intended to strengthen and broaden this development.
>
> "Without considering major modifications in educational or occupational institutions, two patterns of alternation of school and work may be examined. In the first of these patterns, the young person leaves school for a period of time such as a semester, for full-time employment, returning to school subsequently. [The second pattern of alternation of school and work consists of half-time schooling and half-time employment.]

"The proposal here is for school-work alternation for college preparatory programs as well as vocational programs. The aim of such programs should not be primarily to "learn a skill," but to gain experience in responsible interdependent activity--and the importance of such experience is not limited to youth with manual labor destinations.

"Both these patterns of school-work alternation seem to offer sufficient benefits for aiding the transition from school to work to justify the scheduling and organizational arrangements that would make the two activity patterns possible.

"Our proposal is that these be carefully evaluated and that experimentation be carried out with such programs for young people in nonvocational tracks." [pp. 157-159]

Work Organizations that Incorporate Youth

"Educational and work institutions are almost wholly distinct. For a closer connection to be achieved, one strategy is to add educational functions to organizations that have a central work purpose. With this strategy, organizations modified to incorporate youth would not have distinct and separate 'schools' within them to which youth are relegated. Persons of all ages in the organization would have a mixture of learning and working roles, with only the proportions of the mixture varying with age. All but the youngest persons would have a third role as well, teaching. Although there would be some persons in the organization with primary responsibility for teaching or directing the learning of young persons, a large portion of the teaching would be done by persons whose primary responsibilities were in other work.

"Introduction of youth into work organizations of the sort that we are describing will bring a loss of efficiency in its central activity of producing goods or services. At the same time, the participating organization is providing for its youth the sort of academic opportunities now provided by schools and colleges that allow opportunities for advanced training in purely academic settings. This service should be compensated from public funds, as schools now are, offsetting the reduced efficiency in productive activity.

"Such organizational responsibility for the development of youth can be taken by business firms, government organizations, and non-profit organizations, and the responsible agents can be both management and worker's organizations (unions and professional associations). It is important that the design of youth's schedule of activities and the implementation be jointly in the hands

of management and worker's organizations if that design is to be appropriate.

"Close attention would be necessary in the pilot or experimental programs to learn whether the youth activities tend to become segregated into specialized sections of the organization. If this occurred, the intended benefits of the activity of course would be lost. If not, then further information is necessary to learn just what differences such a changed environment makes in the lives of those youth within it." [pp. 160-162]

Dual Minimum Wage

"The panel proposes that there be broad experimentation with a dual minimum wage, lower for youth than for adult workers. A flat minimum wage rate has two deleterious consequences: first, it constricts the number of jobs available to the young, particularly in the 14 to 18 age range and for those with little experience, since their productivity may be significantly below that of experienced and mature workers . . . Second, and perhaps more important, is its effect on the incentive to employers to provide general training on the job for the young. Such training is costly to the employers, and to the extent that it is general rather than specific and hence transferable to other jobs and employers, it will be supplied by employers to the young only if it is offset by lower wages during the initial training periods. A high and uniform minimum wage level discourages such arrangements and transfers the training to the schools, which are not the best places for it." [p. 168]

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE REFORM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (BROWN)

Expanding Career Opportunities

"Secondary schools must realign their curricula to provide students with a range of experiences and activities broad enough to permit them to take full advantage of career opportunities in their communities. To meet this objective, basic components of the school program will have to be offered in the late afternoon or in the evening for some students." [p. 15]

Career Education

"Career awareness programs should be initiated as an integral part of the curriculum to assure an appreciation of the dignity of work. Opportunities for

exploration in a variety of career clusters should be available to students in grades 8 through 10.

"In grades 11 and 12, students should have opportunities to acquire hard skills in a career area of their choice. This training should involve experience in the world outside school and should equip the student with job-entry skills." [pp. 15-16]

Job Placement

"Suitable job placement must be an integral part of the career education program for students planning to enter the labor force upon leaving school. Secondary schools should establish an employment office staffed by career counselors and clerical assistants. The office should work in close cooperation with the state employment services. Agencies certifying counselors for secondary schools should require such counselors to show experience in job placement." [p. 16]

Compulsory Attendance

"If the high school is not to be a custodial institution, the state must not force adolescents to attend. Earlier maturity requires an option of earlier departure from the restraints of formal schooling. The formal school-leaving age should be dropped to age fourteen. Other programs should accommodate those who wish to leave school, and employment laws should be rewritten to assure on-the-job training in full-time service and work." [p. 21]

TASK FORCE FOR NATIONAL PANEL ON HIGH SCHOOLS AND ADOLESCENT EDUCATION (MARTIN)

"Educational and other societal institutions should be urged to actively support the provision of work opportunities for all youth who want them, since work experience can offer interested adolescents a number of potential benefits." [p. 157]

"The Panel feels that youthful employment should not be left to happerstance and strongly recommends that a local job market information center be set up in each community or group of communities, preferably manned by a combination of adolescents and technically qualified adults." [p. 159]

"The Panel concludes that, on the whole, the vocational shop courses in both comprehensive high schools and vocational education schools fail in their stated objectives." [p. 162]

> "The Panel strongly endorses work-study and cooperative education programs for adolescents and calls for their expansion." [p. 163]
>
> "To strengthen the effectiveness of cooperative education and work-study projects, increased emphasis should be placed on providing individualized programs for students." [p. 165]
>
> "Secondary schools may or may not be the best institutions to help youth prepare for and find work, *but they can sanction or certify the learning accrued in the workplace*. The development of proficiency criteria, to replace Carnegie credit units, is one important step in this process." [p. 165]

THE HIGH SCHOOL TODAY

In general, secondary schools recognize the importance of the career preparation function American society has assigned them (Porter et al.; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975a). Myriad activities and special programs testify to that commitment. (In fact, most of the transition-enhancing proposals for reform contained in the reports have been already tried, in one form or another, in individual school districts.) In this section we review the more important proposals and attempt to assess how well they fulfill expectations.

No one denies that *basic cognitive skills* in literacy and computation are critical to securing almost any job the economy has to offer, and schools continue to accept their responsibility to provide these capabilities to students. There is some doubt, however, as to how effectively that job is being done (see Section IV for further discussion).

High schools continue to provide *vocational skill training* for certain students. In fact, total vocational funds from federal, state, and local sources increased tenfold, to more than $2 billion annually between 1960 and 1972. More than 12 million students were enrolled in individual federally aided vocational courses in 1973. More than a half million students were enrolled in vocational, trade, industrial, and distributive education courses in 1973--a number that probably comes close to indicating those majoring or concentrating in

the vocational track. These students accounted for 3.3 percent of all public school students in grades 7 through 12, compared to 5.4 percent in 1949. (*Digest of Educational Statistics*, 1973).

Evaluations that utilize data on post-high school work experience tend to show that vocational majors have somewhat better short-term earning prospects than either academic majors who become full-time workers instead of college attenders or "general" majors, a category that tends to include the least capable high school students (Rogers). Two basic problems plague these evaluations. First, they almost never control for basic ability, which has been shown to affect earnings; thus, they may only be demonstrating that vocational majors are more able than general majors or those academic majors who do not go to college. Second, they do not take into account a more subtle but potentially important variable--motivation, or industriousness. Vocational majors may simply be more work-oriented than the other groups (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). Some evidence for this latter point perhaps is that the higher earnings of vocational majors tend to be attained in occupations other than the ones for which the student was, in fact, trained in high school (Rogers). Or, perhaps the schools do succeed in developing industriousness in their vocational students and fail, relatively, in developing this same behavior in non-vocational students.

Judgmental appraisals of high school vocational programs, by people experienced in the fields in which training is ostensibly given, contain frequent criticisms of the teachers, the curriculum, and the equipment. The common complaint is lack of familiarity with current industrial methods and machines by teachers who have never, or have only in the distant past, worked in the particular occupation.

Career education has recently achieved attention as a solution to some of the problems discussed here. In these programs, occupational awareness replaces occupational training, career exploration substitutes for specific preparation, and job-finding and job-holding skills are favored over explicit vocational skills. Career programs are established for the entire secondary school student body, not merely for those who are or would have been vocational majors. Other emphases

in career education include: integrating occupation-oriented materials into the full spectrum of high school courses, including mathematics, science, language, and social studies; and opening up the schools to the world of work by means of field trips, visiting speakers, conferences, seminars, and the like.

It is still much too early to make judgments on the viability of the career education idea. Preliminary studies, however, have identified a number of problems (e.g., Pascal, 1975b; Fitzgerald; Nash and Agne):

- Secondary teachers seem quite resistant to including the career focus in their teaching. Whether this resistance reflects their disinclination to do the extra preparation required or their desire to "maintain standards" is unclear. The propensity of secondary school teachers to focus rather narrowly on the subject matter of their discipline has been well documented (see Section IV).
- Curriculum coordination in high school level career education continues to be a problem. Students feel no cumulative process of assembling relevant knowledge and insights, but instead feel themselves on the receiving end of a series of repetitive, standardized "pep talks."
- Students tend to evaluate the impact of career education in terms of practical results--better part-time and post-high school jobs, better personal planning--and so far have not seen much to encourage them.
- The success of those few experimental programs in which schools cooperate intensively with employers in providing academic instruction and work experience is, as yet, unknown. Thorough evaluations of such experimental programs have not yet been published.
- Career education still has not found a permanent home in the programs of most high schools. The flurry of innovative activity tends to die down when the federal grant dollars are spent, particularly in secondary schools, and usually leaves little trace of permanent change.

For some years, secondary schools have run programs under such titles as work study, work experience, and cooperative education, which, for convenience, we may call *work release programs*. The central

idea is that students attend school part of the time and work part of the time. The programs have their origin in the desire to maintain some educational services to students who needed or preferred to work. Thus, young people within the compulsory school attendance age and older students who might have dropped out completely were enabled to earn and learn. In recent years, many of these programs have been "enriched" and labeled "cooperative education," to distinguish them from federally sponsored "work-study" programs, which aim at income supplementation for poverty-stricken students. Specially trained counselors are supposed to locate jobs that will yield learning payoffs for their charges, and teachers are encouraged to build classroom instruction around the job experiences of the students. The extent to which job development, work monitoring, and classroom enrichment actually takes place is currently unknown since no systematic evaluations of cooperative education programs have yet been done.* Thus, it has not yet been possible to trace the links between work-release programs and students' ultimate occupational adjustments. Similarly, in some of the experimental career education projects, students spend a major part of their time at employment sites and receive instruction in academic subjects in classroom within office buildings and factories. These pilot projects are also too new for any significant appraisal.

Counseling and guidance of students have a long tradition in high schools, but their effectiveness for occupational purposes is highly uncertain. The typical school counselor has had a strong orientation toward guiding the college-bound student in selecting an appropriate campus and in designing high school programs that will meet college entrance requirements (Armor). Counselors appear to have much less interest in those students whose formal education will terminate with high school and seem to be much less able or inclined to help them. Occupational aptitude testing, job exploration, and job placement

*The Office of Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation in USOE is currently making such an evaluation.

are not common functions in secondary schools. Armor found that the typical high school counselor spends less than 20 percent of the work day helping students with vocational concerns. And, vocational majors in high school report less contact with guidance counselors than academic majors (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). In those relatively rare cases where counselors actually do get involved in significant occupational planning for the non-college bound, the dearth of systematic evaluation makes it virtually impossible to determine whether their efforts are successful and, if so, which of the many types of services they might provide would have the highest potential impact.

* * *

The high schools, then, have long recognized their responsibility to prepare students for working life. How well they have done this is ultimately unknowable, but without doubt they could do better, if only perhaps at the expense of other missions the schools have accepted. The reports point out a number of ways the schools and other societal institutions might facilitate the transition from school to work.

THE PROPOSED REFORMS

Move Away from the Comprehensive High School*

The movement earlier in this century toward the comprehensive high school severely diminished the prominence of the secondary vocational schools that existed in many of the larger American cities. There were two primary grounds for advocating comprehensive high schools. First, such schools were thought to provide the opportunity to expose all students to enriched programs in a wide variety of

*Although none of the reports explicitly endorse the movement suggested in the title of this section, taken together they imply such a departure. Therefore, we feel it useful to discuss comprehensiveness.

academic subjects. Second, there was a desire to bring students from various backgrounds and with various interests together so as to increase the commonality of experience amongst citizens who were expected, as they matured, to work and live together in a democratic society. Neither of these factors has stopped being important. Yet the reports, particularly Coleman's, seem to suggest a retreat from comprehensiveness. There exists the possibility that young people would be directed into different educational programs at fairly early ages. Such segmentation ignores the very problems that the comprehensive schools were designed to alleviate.

None of the reports, in advocating more job-oriented educational experiences, specifies that these experiences be limited to young people from the lower socioeconomic strata. All of the reports pay lip service to the comprehensive ideal in assuring us that the full spectrum of youth will participate in the new programs. In fact, there is reason to doubt such an outcome. More probably, upper middle-class students, with the backing of their parents, will find the work orientation irksome and possibly competitive with college preparation. They will discover ways to avoid participation. Lower-middle- and working-class students are apt to constitute the bulk of the participants in work-oriented educational programs, again often with the approval of their families.*

Thus, the retreat from comprehensiveness has important potential consequences for the attainment of equity in American society. Although the channels to high prestige careers provided by a college education have recently become constricted, the channels are still real. To the extent that youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be academic "late bloomers," in terms both of aspiration and performance, the assignment of children at an early age to a work-oriented program may tend more frequently to foreclose higher

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*A similar kind of selectivity by class would probably emerge if the upper age for compulsory school-attendance were lowered, as is suggested by the Brown panel. Students from the lower socioeconomic strata are more likely to opt for an early dropout.

education opportunities to offspring of the poor and minorities. (On the other hand, it has been argued that students coming from non-academic backgrounds actually learn faster and more effectively when they are exposed to a more practical curriculum, which ought, over time, to improve their economic opportunities.) In any case, the separation of students into academic and work-oriented programs may well lessen their opportunities to come to know each other and to share common experience (Trow). It may be argued that students are already tracked within comprehensive high schools, that they segregate themselves socially within such institutions and, perhaps most important, that parents, by choosing neighborhoods on the basis of economic and social status, effectively segregate students from different backgrounds into different schools. Yet, the comprehensive high school, particularly in an age of deliberate racial desegregation, at least offers the potential for more equal opportunity and more meaningful social integration. The organization of work-oriented high school programs and the self-selection bias by class background that is likely to ensue would seem to diminish such possibilities.

When doubts concerning the equity effects of work-oriented schooling are combined with uncertainties about its efficiency, its promise seems seriously compromised. We have examined some of the reasons for doubting the effectiveness of work-oriented education in ensuring later occupational success and the writers of the three reports have recognized these same uncertainties. They have also been responsive to claims that on-the-job training is more efficacious. This has led some of them to advocate that secondary school students spend much larger fractions of their time in actual, real-world workplaces.

Developing Workplace Education

Workplace education is an umbrella term for several related concepts that the reports advance. Under this term are included all of those schemes that depend on employers to impart a significant share of the total educational experience of the average student. In some plans, the student merely spends a portion of the school day or school

year in a work environment--at "meaningful, didactic" jobs, to be sure; in other plans, basic cognitive skills are actually taught in the workplace. Some schemes concentrate on employers in the public and not-for-profit sectors; others include the full range of organizations, from the mercenary to the eleemosynary. It is claimed that students will benefit from this systematic exposure by gaining (1) a better sense of the constraints and the rewards inherent in adult working life, (2) improved ability to get along with adults, (3) clearer vision of the relevance of various aspects of formal education, (4) enhanced motivation that results from a successful response to real challenges, and (5) pocket money.

Despite its alleged advantages, workplace education raises problems concerning both its feasibility of implementation and its compatibility with the achievement of equity in American society. We will concentrate on the first issue since the threat to equity--that the appeal of workplace education will be inversely related to socioeconomic status--has been discussed immediately above. There are, however, some additional equity considerations.

To our knowledge, no one has attempted a systematic evaluation of the job-development component in current high school work-release programs--an activity that bears obvious similarities with workplace education. One would particularly want information on the quality of the jobs obtained for students, measured by the learning content of those jobs. Such data would constitute an interesting test of the assumption that employers are willing and able to provide the appropriate kinds of jobs to young people. For students to secure only menial and routinized jobs would not be the goal most advocates of workplace education put forward. However, even if the employers who participated in a pilot demonstration were able to provide good jobs, we would have little reason to feel confident that such would occur in a large-scale, nationwide program.

The part-time work that most students now perform is not particularly rewarding in the sense discussed here, although, no doubt, the jobs often provide important income supplementation and may contribute to feelings of self-worth and personal autonomy. What leads

workplace education advocates to believe that substantially enhanced programs can assure that "good" jobs will be available in sufficient numbers? Evaluations of on-the-job training schemes for adult workers with modest skill attainments do not conduce optimism. The Job Opportunities in the Business Sector (JOBS) program, run by the National Alliance of Businessmen during the late 1960s, designed to increase significantly the numbers of disadvantaged workers on the payrolls of "respectable" organizations, was plagued by problems of non-compliance, rapid turnover, fraud, and misrepresentation (Fried et al.). The policing of the contracts, when sufficiently rigorous to ensure compliance, was found so onerous that many enterprises withdrew from the program. On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs administered by the Department of Labor's Manpower Administration fared better, but they dealt with workers who were much more attractive to the average employer (in general, see Ashenfelter; Hammermesh; Stromsdorfer).

Some workplace education proponents realize that for-profit employers, and many not-for-profit and government employers as well, will require financial incentives to induce them to hire the young in significant proportions at meaningful jobs. In fact, in a background staff paper prepared for the Martin panel, Mushkin (1972) reviews the various mechanisms for ensuring such inducements. These include extra tax credits for the costs of training young workers, subsidies for additional workmen's compensation costs, forgiveness of OASDHI and medical insurance premiums, and a lowering of the minimum wage for workers under 21. (The dual minimum wage is also mentioned in the Coleman Report.) While these are all interesting proposals--in fact, we recommend further research on some of them below--we hasten to point out that they are not automatically effective in producing the kinds of jobs desired. Only fairly close-range policing is likely to ensure that, and, as a general rule, the more policing required, the lower the rate of participation by employers. In addition, we must recognize that tax credits, subsidies, and policing expenses are social costs--as is the possible displacement of adult workers, which we discuss below; these must be balanced against the benefits of the schemes. Of course, to the extent that employers can efficiently

assume functions traditionally fulfilled by the schools, the resource costs of educating and supervising students will merely be shifted and not necessarily increased.

The workplace education plans that emphasize public-sector jobs, such as those in the Martin and Coleman reports, are not without problems either. First, we must recognize that even when subsidies to local government are earmarked for public employment for youth, there may not be a significant *net* increase in such jobs if, as often happens, agencies cut ongoing programs for young workers as a response to the receipt of a federal grant (Johnson and Tomola). Even when the schemes generate no direct costs, there may be problems. For example, we might envisage a program in which local government offices, hospitals, recreation facilities, and the like are assigned quotas of young people to employ and educate. Recall, however, the experience of the War on Poverty's New Careers Program, in which just this kind of service was to be given to welfare mothers, the hard-core unemployed, the handicapped, etc., in public sector organizations. Even more relevant is the experience of the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which hires young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to work on government projects of various sorts. In reviewing these programs, most analysts conclude that the new people hired were never really integrated into the preexisting civil service work force, they performed mostly menial tasks, and they received paltry amounts of useful training. (On the fate of such public employment programs, see Johnson and Tomola; Brown, 1972; Smith and Pitcher).

One issue seldom touched on by the advocates of workplace education is the potential effect on the custodial function that schools, even high schools, now perform. Although educational theorists may downplay the importance of this function, we doubt that parents, neighbors, merchants, and policemen think it unimportant. How adequately could employers handle this role, even if they were willing to take it on? Would the community feel comfortable in assigning the custodial role to organizations for which the care of the young is, at best, a minor concern? Could the schools continue to oversee the safety and conduct of their charges when these charges are to be elsewhere for large portions of the school day?

The chief danger posed by workplace education lies not in its monetary cost, or its potential for interference with corporate personnel procedures, or probably even in its consequences for the out-of-school behavior of students. Its chief danger lies in the fact that it does nothing to change the pool of jobs in the economy--a pool that is predominantly determined by the state of national aggregate demand. As young people spend more time in workplaces and less time in schools, and in numbers much larger than at present, they displace workers in the former and make redundant other workers in the latter. At both extremes, the adult workers affected will be disproportionately female and minority, groups that only recently have achieved modest job gains and are, therefore, likely to be highly resistant to the threatened incursions.* To the extent that workers in employment sites combine teaching of their new charges with their normal duties, the decline in demand for their services will be moderated. In any case, equity considerations emerge that affect not only young people for whom work-oriented education will mean more segmentation in basic educational experience, but also adults in relation to shares of the pool of entry-level jobs.

The resistance of affected groups is likely to be much more than merely rhetorical. Witness the tenacity with which union lobbyists oppose plans for a subminimum wage for youth, and the degree of opposition to lowering the upper limit of the compulsory school attendance age by labor unions in general and by teacher groups in particular.

Even if successful macroeconomic policy ends the recession and the demand for labor resumes brisk growth, it is not clear that the various adult interest groups would be willing to allocate an appreciable share of new jobs to students "playing at work." Recall that

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*Conversely, it must be recognized that the economy was able to absorb very large numbers of additional female workers in the post-war era; this fact should lessen our fears about the possibility of finding work for large numbers of young people *over the long run*.

there are large numbers of adult breadwinners unemployed and there probably are many women waiting at home for the opportunity to join the paid labor force.

Reducing Job Entry Barriers

Other reforms have been proposed that also seek to expand opportunities for young people. These do not appear prominently in the published reports, but are touched upon in the Martin report and in the background papers prepared for that panel (e.g., by Mushkin). These reforms include reducing unrealistic licensing and certification requirements for certain jobs, easing direct union restrictions on entry into particular trades, altering coverage of the child labor laws to make them conform to contemporary industrial practices, and lowering other legal or institutional obstacles to free entry.* We do not dispute the desirability of any such reforms. They would reduce the arbitrary barriers that prevent people from performing jobs for which they are competent. Their adoption would lead to higher overall efficiency in the economy as well as expanded opportunities for young workers. We do question the political feasibility of the proposals. Employee groups, like most employers, when given the chance, act to protect their markets. To expect them to give up what appears to them an important element of job protection to further a rather vague social objective whose benefits, if they did appear,** would most likely go to other people's children, is to ask a lot. If the reforms could only be achieved in exchange for compensation of one kind or another to affected groups, we must count such compensation as a real, if difficult to calculate, cost of any workplace education program.

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*Related is the Brown report proposal to reduce the upper legal age for compulsory school attendance.

**Later in this chapter, we discuss possible techniques for anticipating the downstream benefits to young workers of various forms of early work experience.

Expansion and Improvement of Career Counseling and Placement in the High Schools

The reports emphasize the importance of authentic improvements in the manner in which high schools guide students into the world of work. Only about one-fifth of high school seniors report that they often discuss their post-secondary school plans with guidance counselors. More than two-thirds complain about the performance of their school with regard to job placement, vocational programs, and practical work experience (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975), even though better job information among high school students *is* related to better eventual jobs (Parnes and Kohne). The Martin report actually proposes new guidance institutions outside the high school. One can applaud such sentiments, but one must also ask how these improvements are to be achieved. What recent improvements in diagnostic and counseling techniques will help bring about more appropriate placements? Whence the new knowledge of emerging patterns of demand for labor in specific local economies? The reports exhort improvements but recommend nothing much beyond expanding the number of career-oriented counselors. Although the Brown report does suggest that schools specifically hire career counselors with demonstrated labor market knowledge and experience, it says little about improving the guidance and placement techniques such counselors use. Although additional contact with career counselors should prove valuable to high school students, we feel that improvement in guidance practice itself is a central requirement. Experienced professionals in the field have also remarked on the importance of real-life experience data for counselors of young people (e.g., Holland, 1975); we return to this theme below.

CONCLUSIONS

Is the secondary school systematically failing in its attempts to ease the transition from school to work? Because so many other powerful forces are at work in the larger society, the question is exceedingly difficult to answer. Youth unemployment has grown in absolute numbers, but the recession and the enormous size (in relation

to the past) of current labor-market-entry cohorts have a great deal to do with this.* Parental affluence (spreading substantially, if erratically, in the post-war era) must also play a role. And the artificial barriers that prevent the entry of young workers into certain industries and occupations have exacerbated the problem.

Youngsters *could* have more meaningful work experiences, but will they or their parents wish to take advantage of any new opportunities granted? And will organized groups of workers and profit-minded employers allow the opportunities to be granted? Finally, do we want a society in which young persons compete with low status, adult workers for entry-level jobs? A society in which there is, inevitably, increasing segregation in preparatory experience among young people, depending on their social background and academic ability? A society in which academic and cultural pursuits, training for citizenship, and self-development are downplayed in favor of producing more committed workers? All these questions require answers before decisions about the proposed reforms can be made. In the meantime, we offer some suggestions for developing routes to the new knowledge needed for making informed decisions.

Certain of the ideas recommended by the reports obviously merit continued study. Careful and comprehensive evaluations of such current programs as job-oriented education and work-release must continue. Much richer and more extensive data accumulations are now becoming available and these will permit analyses superior to what has heretofore been possible. We discuss these new informational opportunities below.

Small-scale experiments on such schemes as workplace education and the easing of job-entry barriers also seem worth mounting. Studies

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*Whether the members of the baby boom cohort will be "cursed for life" in terms of economic opportunity (as suggested, e.g., in O'Toole, 1975) is subject to debate. Certain adjustment mechanisms, such as market wage rates, should make them more competitive with older and younger workers over time.

should focus, of course, on the resource costs and on the long-term career benefits that may be generated by these programs, but should not ignore three other important considerations: (1) Does the behavior of youth released from the confinement of school allay concern over the relinquishment of custodial responsibilities? (2) What are the reactions of the groups (employers, worker organizations) whose cooperation is required to implement the programs? and (3) What extrapolations from the reactions to these pilot schemes provide insight into the political feasibility of large-scale programs?

Another interesting idea for social experimentation is prominently mentioned in the Coleman report: the establishment of a system of educational drawing rights (EDR). Industrial education reformers in Europe, adult education specialists in this country, and "life-cycle-oriented" social scientists have all recently proposed a system that would permit a breaking of the chronological lockstep traditionally governing school, work, and retirement (see Pascal, 1975a). For example, in these systems, people within certain ages (e.g., 17 and 65) would be given the right and financial wherewithal to obtain educational services in a time sequence that suits their individual preferences and situations. High school seniors would be able to participate. The rights would be conveyed by vouchers exchangeable for a wide variety of educational services--formal schooling, skill training, apprenticeships, OJT, or whatever. In some schemes, income support becomes available for periods in which the individual must withdraw from the labor market. The program may be financed through payroll taxes, and might be supplemented by rearrangements in the timing of benefits due the individual (e.g., the rights to retirement, vacation, and secondary education could be modified to pay for a course of study on a work sabbatical). Proponents of the schemes are far from having resolved all the problems. Among those that loom large are doubts about people's ability to predict their own future preferences and concern about provisions for forgiveness in cases where unforeseen circumstances arise--illness, change of residence, unanticipated family responsibilities, and the like.

Still, the educational drawing rights proposals seem very promising and they obviously warrant further study. They appear particularly appropriate to the problem of school-to-work transition because they permit so much more individual freedom in arranging the transition and because, we suspect, much of the current concern arises directly out of the forced lockstep of current practice. There must be many people of high school age who would prefer, after graduation, to work in a series of exploratory jobs, reserving serious career training until, perhaps, their late twenties. Others will want short intensive courses spread throughout their work lives; still others will opt for the traditional high school-college or trade school-work sequence. EDR systems permit the tailoring of sequences to individual needs and tastes.

Some of the benefits of EDRs could be attained fairly simply by means of substantial expansion in adult education budgets. Thus, people who have received less preparation than they feel they need in their high school years, because they chose or were obligated to work, could get additional training in publicly subsidized adult education programs. Expanded adult opportunities reduce the current constraints that, in effect, make adolescence and education coterminous.

At the start of this chapter, we focused on the need to relate preparatory experiences to downstream life-consequences. Evaluation of any program or experiment requires longitudinal data covering the transition period and extending well into the adult years, to the time when the promised benefits of the particular treatment are supposed to be reaped. Recently, several data bases have become available that do precisely that: *Project Talent*, the *National Longitudinal Survey of Young Men* (known also as the Parnes survey), the Social Security Administration's *Continuous Work History Sample*, and NCES's *National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972*. Each study has its own strengths and weaknesses, but together they permit analysts to trace, over the years, the fates of people who experienced an enormous variety of educational experiences and activities--school and college programs and curricula, counseling support, job-search practices, out-of-school skill training, on-the-job training, and so on. We can thus form estimates of the effects of the

activities and experiences on such outcomes as earnings, career advancement, and job satisfaction, while, at the same time, "controlling" for the impact of such attributes as ability, socioeconomic background, age, race, sex, residence, and the impact of local labor market conditions. Data bases derived from one or more of these sources promise a tremendous increase in our power to predict the consequences of many different kinds of treatments and many different modes of transition. They will significantly enhance our ability to evaluate programs accurately and, as time goes on, can serve as very important tools to career counselors and guidance experts. With appropriate organization of these data, it should prove possible to tailor the sequences of the training of the individual to his or her characteristics and career aspirations. In addition, the planning would be based on the life experiences of near contemporaries, rather than on textbook theories and vague perceptions of current conditions.

IV. REFORMING THE HIGH SCHOOL

(Susan Abramowitz and Michael Timpane)

This section focuses on how the reports view the high school--the major institution affecting all adolescents. The aim of our discussion is to:

- Enumerate and evaluate the reports' basic propositons about high schools.
- Discuss the feasibility of the proposed reforms.
- Consider problems the proposed reforms leave untouched.

THE REPORTS' BASIC PROPOSITIONS ABOUT HIGH SCHOOLS

The reports' propositions about the high school cover three broad and related themes: the high schools are isolated and bureaucratic; the student culture is a negative factor in high schools; and inappropriate social missions prevent the high school from carrying out its educative function. According to the reports, these problems combine to make the high school unresponsive to the needs of their clientele.

High Schools Are Not Responsive

The reports say the needs of high school students have changed drastically for at least three reasons: changes in developmental patterns; changes in the social and ethnic composition of high schools; and changes in students' experiences (the result of changes in family child-rearing practices and increased contact with the world via television). These changing needs, the reports say, have not been adequately met by current institutions of secondary education.

Changes in developmental patterns have undoubtedly occurred, especially in physiological realms (see Section II). Earlier physical maturity, however, does not necessarily imply an earlier onset of cognitive and emotional maturity (as the reports assume). It is also clear that the developmental attainments of individuals vary significantly over several dimensions at any given chronological age. Yet this has always been so.

Changes in the socioeconomic composition of high schools are undeniable. In the past 20 years, high school completion has become the rule (75 to 80 percent of the age cohort) rather than the exception, and the increases in attainment have occurred primarily among working class and minority group youth (see Section I). Recent desegregation policies have also shuffled socioeconomically and culturally disparate students among high schools. The population of high school students clearly has different problems and needs (Havighurst et al., 1971) than the students of 20 years ago.

Changes in child-rearing practices and media experience have also undoubtedly occurred (Boocock, 1972). Child-rearing practices have become more diverse, with upper-class practices veering toward newer, more democratic patterns, while lower-class families have stayed closer to traditional norms. High schools have become similarly diverse, with some becoming more "open" and "democratic," while others remain more traditionally structured. These companion developments have created new potential for mismatch where "traditional" schooling meets "modern" child-rearing (a problem for upper-class students and parents) or vice versa (mostly a problem for working-class families). Mismatch can also occur for certain personality types who, irrespective of social class, may require differing degrees and kinds of authority structures in school. Studies of young children have discovered some adverse achievement effects stemming from such mismatching, and some positive effects from a correct match of behavioral style for student and teacher (Smith). But the extent and significance of clashes between child-rearing patterns and high school experiences is unknown.

As for the media, its effects on the performance of high school students remains to be demonstrated. Perhaps it has produced more sophisticated consumers of knowledge, who are less satisfied with the dull and irrelevant, and more in need of learning how to evaluate various forms of information. Perhaps its primary effect has been a passivity that transfers easily to the classroom.

In sum, the presumed changes in the development, social composition, and experience of students point to no clear direction in which high schools might "respond."

High Schools Are Isolated and Bureaucratic

The reports suggest that several of the reasons why high schools have not kept pace with these changes are structural, and result from the isolation and bureaucratization of secondary schooling. Historically, schools have tried to be politically isolated; schoolmen have consciously sought separate, nonpartisan patterns of governance in order to better control the educational enterprise (Bailey et al.). The professional education of teachers, coming immediately after their own schooling, as well as its apprenticeship nature, results in teachers without a wealth of experience external to the schools. According to one line of thought (Sarason), this isolation has brought about a separate culture of schooling that is not easily understood by the outside world. In high schools, the reports believe that this isolation has aggravated the age segregation that nearly universal attendance has caused.

The reports dwell more extensively on another structural problem, *bureaucratization*. According to the reports, high schools are too structurally rigid to handle the needs of their clientele. Extending existing bureaucratic models, the reports maintain that the high schools have become routinized; teachers, authoritarian; and the institution, overlarge and incapable of reform.

Routinized, Standard Way of Life. The bureaucratic model of school organization assumes a functional division of labor, a definition of staff roles as "offices," a hierarchical ordering of offices, and organizational maintenance and operation governed by a well-defined set of rules. Instances of all of these attributes are evident in most high schools. Teachers are usually subject-matter specialists responsible for instructional activities; principals are in charge of business and overall management. To qualify for particular positions, incumbents must meet a specified set of criteria. For the system to run smoothly and "rationally," certain rules are established to govern behavior and movement (e.g., dress codes, work schedules, the large batch processing of students who move from class to class at preset intervals, etc.). In many schools, physical structure reinforces bureaucratic structure.

Long corridors connect similar enclosures, each containing a few dozen young persons with one adult. The arrangement of furniture bespeaks each occupant's role and status--one large desk faces many smaller ones.

However, in certain ways, professional rather than bureaucratic models may more aptly describe the high school. For example, in many school districts, each high school principal and staff enjoy considerable community support and autonomy from district level management. The principal helps his professional staff to fend off top-down control of the instructional process and teachers have some freedom to do their job in individual classrooms as best they can, acting more in accordance with professional norms than as bureaucratic job holders.

It is difficult to say much more about how bureaucratic or oppressively rigid high schools are. Then many critical commentaries of the past two decades, (e.g., Silberman; Friedenberg, 1959; Goodman) all find high schools to be from moderately to fatally bureaucratic. For example, one recent critique asserts that schools' oppressive physical appearance; closely supervised, isolated classes; and competitive learning environment are conducive to regimentation and regulation, and result in student docility (Haney and Zimbardo).

But systematic research on school structure, like that done on the structure of industrial, other governmental, and volunteer organizations, is quite limited. We have little literature that measures the bureaucratization of high schools. Individual schools and districts undoubtedly vary in how bureaucratized they are. Bureaucratization may be greater, for example, in schools in larger districts, in larger schools, or in urban schools.

Authoritarian Teachers. The reports also suggest that within the basic bureaucratic setting, teaching is often hampered by the necessity to control suddents. This view reflects a long-standing school of thought that contends that high school teachers are confronted in the classroom by a miniature student society. Students are involuntary clients who lack intrinsic motivation and must be controlled. Conscripted to attend school, they are considered as intrinsically alienated from their school tasks. Teachers are locked into "offices" and

power struggles with unwilling clients and rebellious youth cohorts. The school must, through its organizational arrangements, contain the adversary relationship between the student culture and the teacher (Waller; Gordon; Coleman; Cook; Bidwell). The Coleman report emphasizes this aspect of school life:

> But the passivity seems to take on new qualities when it is shared among a very large number of young people, prolonged over more years and involved in relations with specialized teachers who know little about the students as individuals. . . . The deepening passivity promotes counter forces: a seeking by the young of autonomy and activity in the world of their own--the youth culture--and a highly resentful reaction to what they are asked to do as students. (p. 81)

Lecture and recitation continue to be the dominant modes of interaction in high school classrooms (*National Longitudinal Study*, 1975). According to the theoreticians, these teaching styles help to keep students under control and enhance the paternalistic, distant teacher-student relationship. Moreover, the inclination to use alternative methods of teaching seems to be lessened when a teacher faces students of differing abilities, believes that all students should be occupied, or feels obligated to cover a certain amount of material (Dreeben, 1973). In short, teachers perceive lecture and recitation as efficient methods of control.

There is some counterevidence suggesting that the teacher is neither an impersonal bureaucrat nor a patronizing authoritarian. First, what teachers actually do in the classroom fits awkwardly into the image of the teacher as model bureaucrat (Bidwell; Dreeben, 1973). Since teaching lacks a well-defined technology, the practitioner has and needs considerable autonomy in going about his or her task. Although a school system may delineate the content and scope of a teacher's curriculum, the teacher is usually free to choose his or her own method. Nor do the organization's rules direct the teacher's central activity (unless the teacher cannot control the class).

Second, different students, classes, and schools may profit from differing degrees of authoritarian structure depending, as we said,

upon students' family backgrounds, and personality types. And finally, not all teachers abuse the authority inherent in their position: Many use their authority to motivate rather than coerce students. The classroom environment provides the teachers with much activity that *must* be supervised and coordinated. Students recognize teacher authority as legitimate as long as it is not capricious and unfair. Where authority is used judiciously and legitimately, students tend to be motivated and attentive (Smith and Geoffrey; Kounin).

Teachers in the last decade have not unanimously resisted such new arrangements as team teaching or independent study, which do potentially alter authority relationships. However, teacher acceptance of fundamentally revised educational roles for students is less common. Except for alternative schools, where special groups of teachers and students select themselves for participation, high school teachers are not inclined to share their responsibility for the instructional process with the learner. It would seem, then, that although teachers are less rigidly authoritarian than the bureaucratic model asserts, they are limited either by their professional role or by organizational habit from redefining their basic methods of structuring classroom activities.

Oversized High Schools. According to the reports American high schools are too large. This largeness, compounded by bureaucratic management, provides too little individual attention for students and leads to more and deeper alienation.

But have American high schools become too large? Between 1967 and 1972 (see Table 8), the range of high school size changed little.

As of 1972, the percentage of schools enrolling fewer than 500 students decreased to the same extent that the percentage of schools in Conant's "medium-sized comprehensive" class (750-1999) increased. The percentage of high school students enrolled in these medium-sized schools since 1967 (approximately half) remained constant. Overall, there was a slight increase in the average size of high schools (*Digest of Educational Statistics*, 1973). Some of the growth was brought about by the closing and consolidation of very small high schools; the remainder of the increase would be more than accounted for by the increase

Table 8

SIZE OF AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS IN 1967 AND 1972

Number of Students	0-499	500-749	750-999	1000-1999	Over 2000
Percentage of Schools, 1967*	45.5	18.2	11.0	19.3	6.1
Percentage of Schools, 1972**	39.0	17.2	14.4	23.4	6.0

*Conant, 1967.

**Nehrt, 1972.

number of adolescents in most areas and the greater holding power of the high school.

Although schools may not have increased in size during the last decade, it may still be true that large schools are overly routinized, bureaucratized, and alienating institutions. This is not an unimportant contention since 20 percent of the high school population attend schools enrolling over 2000 students and 40 percent attend schools enrolling between 1000 and 2000.

There is certainly evidence in the literature on organizational behavior that institutional size is an important factor in determining organizational structure. According to this perspective, as an organization size increases, the amount of communication among members decreases and control mechanisms, role specialization, and coordination processes increase (Indik). These factors, in turn, are presumed to affect the quality of interpersonal relationships within the organization. Unfortunately, almost none of this literature examines high schools, and evidence available from other sources bears only indirectly on the notion that larger schools are more bureaucratized: schools with large numbers of students, when compared with schools with smaller numbers of students, tend to have more specialized staffs and services, a tenure system, teacher examinations as a feature of the appointment process, and more tracking and ability grouping of students (Mayeski, 1972). Since large schools have fewer teachers per pupil (Mayeski, 1973),

and are more likely to experience student violence (Bailey, cited in Brown, 1975), it is indeed conceivable that large schools rely more on program standardization, batch processing, and other management strategies that facilitate the efficient control of students.

Largeness may also diminish many students' participation in school activities. Barker and Gump, in their seminal work, *Big School-Small School* (1964), investigated student life in a sample of Kansas high schools. They found that large high schools provide a greater range of activities, but this greater variety did not guarantee greater student participation. In the small schools, most students were involved in extracurricular and in-school activities, whereas in large schools, only a small percentage of students were similarly involved. Small schools needed as much of the school population as possible to participate or involve themselves in some way in order to maintain the existence of school activities. Students in small schools felt that their participation in school life was important and even necessary, regardless of how well they performed academically. Students in large schools, especially less successful students, seem more apt to "get lost in the shuffle." Evidently, such effects of largeness, plus tracking, have kept unrealized one of the anticipated benefits of larger, comprehensive schools: the bringing together of varied classes of students for mutual experiences.

In terms of cost and pupil achievement, the effects of size are similarly uncertain. According to two careful statewide studies, large high schools offer some economies of scale in the delivery of an educational program, but only up to a level of about 1600 students (Cohn; Riew). In terms of results, considering both elementary and secondary schools, recent reanalysis of the Coleman Report on Equal Educational Opportunity found that school size was not significantly related one way or the other to academic achievement, study habits, or students' educational plans (Mayeski, 1973). Important additional data about life in various-sized high schools exist but are inaccessible. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (1970) and the NLS collected data on high schools and students, but have yet to analyze the results of student achievement in terms of school characteristics. Were the data

to be analyzed by certain school characteristics, such as size of student body, we might see how student achievement and other outcomes relate to the size and other structural characteristics of the high school.

In discussing the problem of "large" high schools, the reports overlook an important correlate to school size: most very large high schools are located in urban areas (with a sizable remainder in the larger metropolitan suburbs) (see Table 9). The great majority of high school students in the nation (over 80 percent) attend schools with enrollments below 2000, but just the opposite is the case for students in the largest cities.

Table 9

ENROLLMENT OF ALL U.S. SECONDARY SCHOOLS
COMPARED WITH LARGE-CITY SCHOOLS

(1972)

	U.S.*		5 Largest Cities**	
	% of schools	% of students	% of schools	% of students
Less than 1000	71	41	17	4
1000 - 1999	23	40	22	12
2000 + above	6	19	63	84

*Nehrt, 1972.

**Directory of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1972.

Thus, problems associated with school size are often compounded by or confounded with urbanicity. For example, large schools *and* urban schools have the following set of problems in common: more student turnover (both influx and outflow); more disciplinary problems (destruction of property, stealing, etc.); more pupils per teacher; and more pupils per class. Moreover, many city high schools are huge because of pupil population density and sheer economic necessity.

Large urban high schools might benefit more than other large high schools from sharp reductions in size; but such developments would not guarantee dramatic improvement in urban secondary education.

Inability to Innovate. Both the Coleman and Martin reports are pessimistic about the ability of the high school to reform itself. They consider schools so bureaucratically entrenched that the probability of internal reform is extremely low.

Recent evidence substantiates the contention that high school reform is difficult to achieve. High school teachers seem to believe that their first priority is coverage of topics in their discipline (National Education Association). They do not welcome innovations that, in effect, redefine their teaching role. As Berman and McLaughlin report (1975), in commenting on the success of federally sponsored-change agent programs:

> Indifferent and unreceptive environments were frequent in our sample of projects attempted in secondary schools. Change agent projects that included the higher grade levels experienced severe management and administrative problems as well as teacher resistance. For example, Right-to-Read projects consistently encountered resistance at the high school level as they attempted to persuade science or history teachers to view themselves as teachers of reading. The same thing happened with career education projects. Project managers could generate little interest in new ideas among secondary school tea teachers of solid subjects who perceive themselves as having large intellectual and emotional investments in academic purity. In short, this tendency toward strict professionalism among secondary school teachers (along with the compartmentalization of the curriculum and classroom scheduling) may not have provided the organizational conditions necessary for significant change efforts.

Other federal project grant programs, such as Experimental Schools, have had similar experiences with secondary schools.* Often, in fact, federal grants have tried to work outside the high schools to foster change not obtainable within (e.g., career educational centers, street academies, etc.).

However, all these federal programs were pursuing intervention strategies. High schools seem to have considerable ability for limited change from within. Most principals of large high schools report that they had been involved in tryouts of experimental foreign language, mathematics,

*This statement is based on private conversations with Experimental School Project evaluators (Summer, 1975).

and national science curricula (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1965). Accelerated programs in science and mathematics, programmed instruction, and team teaching were also usually reported. (And the larger the high schools, the more likely the presence of such innovations.)

The high school curriculum reforms inaugurated in the 1960s have been widely adopted. Of course, they had the advantage of being subject-matter specific. Teachers learned the *new* biology or the *new* chemistry, but were not required to learn material outside their fields of expertise. Those curricula that entailed subject-matter overlap or an interdisciplinary orientation met with strikingly less success. The new curricula were also very successful in changing the content of secondary education. Students were being taught *and* were learning an entirely new curriculum, especially in the physical and biological sciences (Walker, and Shaffarzick).

At a smaller, but still significant rate, high schools are beginning to make significant organizational changes. Creating subschool units, changing ecological arrangements (e.g., providing student meeting and study areas, etc.), and redefining participant roles (e.g., faculty assume counseling responsibilities, etc.) are examples of changes that are being adopted more frequently (Hartman; Crabtree; Marland; Johnston and Parker; Moseley; Gorman; Tanner; Weber; and Schoenholtz).

The Student Culture Interferes with Schooling

The Coleman and Martin reports maintain that a student culture is a substantial and growing factor that makes educating adolescents more difficult. Peer-group culture was clearly identified as a reality in high schools by many studies in the 1950s and 1960s (notably Coleman, 1961); one of its main effects, then, was reportedly a fostering of anti-intellectualism. According to both reports, however, the youth culture became a more negative factor in schools during the late 1960s and early 1970s--youth were becoming more "disconnected" from adults (Martin), their fads and customs were changing more rapidly, and their relationship with adults was becoming increasingly unstable.

We have covered elsewhere the general characteristics of the youth peer group in our society, its involvement in historical events, and its role in the processes of socialization to adulthood (see Section II). Here we will simply review two contentions of the reports on specific relationships between the school and the peer group:

(1) Our secondary education system intensifies the strength of the peer group process by keeping youth segregated from other societal functions and denying them responsibility.

(2) The youth culture, in turn, hinders schooling by making youth hostile to adult points of view and impervious to the authority of teachers or to family and community influence.

This view of the extent of the peer culture and the school's role in shaping it is not universally held. Many sociologists have found that youth do not oppose many adult standards and that the peer group performs quite limited social functions, mostly those in which adults have little stake (Kandell et al.). One recent anthropological study of a Mid-western high school found, for instance, that the peer group functioned mostly to organize and occupy the many "dead spots" in the high school's instructional day (Cusick, 1973a). Furthermore, the sources of influence in peer-group formation are said to be located in numerous aspects of our complex, technological, and changing society, not just in the school.

Unfortunately, we know of no careful recent studies that establish whether or not today's peer groups function any differently in schools than those observed in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, the direct connection between peer-group pressures and educational performance has not been clearly established. Again, many studies suggest that American youth peer groups disparage and discourage intellectual excellence; but there is no indication that they do so any more than society-at-large, and the actual effect of this peer-group pressure on individual achievement and attainment is likewise not established (McDill and Coleman). In fact, in one major theory of cognitive development, adolescence is seen as a stage when the student is beginning to formulate hypotheses, consider alternative explanations, and otherwise function

analytically, and the peer group provides a milieu in which contradictory positions can be safely considered (Inhelder and Piaget; Piaget).

The Mission of the High Schools is Wrong

All of the reports believe that high schools have undertaken too many missions connected with the upbringing of young people. The Coleman report, which emphasizes how difficult socialization is in large, isolated high schools, concludes that high schools can only do two things well--provide academic training and help guide students to other necessary experiences. The Martin report is worried that the high school's academic performance is deteriorating and laments that the high school does not have the resources to perform such other necessary functions as job-skill training, social-class integration, citizenship training, and safe custody. The Brown report points out that the constantly shifting mission of the high school has resulted in an institutional identity crisis. None of the reports believes that the high school does well at meeting all the demands made on it.

Moreover, all three reports agree that high schools teach students too few of the skills needed for dealing with the world at large. According to the reports, youth attend an institution that keeps them separate, passive, and dependent, rather than fostering familiarity with adult activities, personal initiative, and responsibility toward others.

Primary Academic Mission. The reports share the view that academic learning has been and should remain a central function of high schools and one with which high schools can succeed. The reports suggest, however, that many high schools exalt traditional academic learning styles (more than the learning itself), and succeed only with students who can learn in these traditional styles. They are also concerned that even this limited, somewhat biased, success is being eroded because the high schools are distracted by myriad new requirements to contain and train their students.

These perspectives seem accurate to us. There has long been a tension between the academic and general education objectives of high schools. Regardless of public opinion (see Section V) and the many

attempts to broaden the curriculum, the academic subjects have retained their high status and value. Consequently, the development of non-academic skills gets short shrift, as the Martin report aptly notes. Artistry, creativity, manual dexterity, etc. are not recognized as valuable skills. Those students who do not measure up to the academic norms of the high school get insufficient chance to develop other areas of expertise and may end up feeling less worthwhile than their more academically successful counterparts.

On the other hand, concentration on academic subjects does not guarantee acquisition of basic skills. Although NAEP results indicate that proficiency in some important areas, such as reading and consumer mathematics, is increasing (*Condition of Education*), far too many adolescents graduate from high school with poorly developed general and basic skills in the areas of reading comprehension and mathematical fluency (Johnson, 1975).

Moreover, recent trends in some national achievement tests point to a decline in the average academic performance of succeeding classes of secondary school students (for example, see Harnischfeger and Wiley, 1976). Results of standardized reading and mathematics achievement tests, college entrance examinations, and several National Assessment tests (e.g., mathematics and science) all point to a decline in performance levels. There are several possible causes for this observed deterioration. Students who once would have dropped out (and who have been demonstrated to have lower academic ability levels and perhaps are less motivated test-takers) now tend to stay in school, and their test performances affect the averages.* Teachers have argued that students do not work as hard as they used to and, consequently, learn less. Parents are alleged to apply less pressure toward academic achievement than used to be the case and there are indications that, of late, fewer high school students are taking "basic" courses, such as English. Others suggest that, in the shift from rote learning to more holistic learning

*To the extent that the downward drift in average performance is a consequence only of reduction in drop-out rates, the schools should be judged to have scored a gain in overall performance.

approaches, the knowledge acquired is not fully reflected on standardized tests (for example, see Hodgkinson).

The high schools may also be doing little about improving the relative performance of different types of students. A recent reanalysis of Project Talent data (Jencks and Brown; Hauser et al.) revealed that high schools (circa 1960) did little to change the relative educational performance of entering students; performance was mostly determined by social class. Consequently, by the end of the twelfth grade, there is tremendous disparity in achievement among various regional and ethnic groups (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1975). In all subject areas, performance is relatively low for people living in the Southwest, blacks, lower-class urban dwellers, and students whose parents had little or no high school education. Thus, high schools are not notably successful in teaching academic skills to *all* of those enrolled.

Social Objectives. High schools are asked to do many things besides educate--keep youth off the labor market, take care of adolescents while their parents work, and combat many of the ill effects of deprivation and discrimination.*

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*"The faith in the power of schooling, aside from the current attack on its severe limitations, has encouraged the burdening of schools with more and more obligations: From the task of engendering racial harmony, teaching the evils of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, to sex education, the inventory of society's impositions on the school is a catalog of our community's old and new anxieties. Consequently the American High School staggers under a burden of a large number of shifting responsibilities and hopes.... Educators have abetted this process of curricular accretion through a rather innocent assumption that the school unilaterally (assuming a cooperative family) could reshape personalities, mold attitudes, raise ambitions, train skills, and impart knowledge in settings severely out of touch with other educational forces including the media and the peer culture." (Martin report)

The Brown report states: "The American comprehensive high school today must be viewed as an establishment striving to meet the complex demands of a society in the throes of social change, at a time when the school system has become too large as an institution and is literally

The social responsibilities of high schools stem from the nation's ongoing push for equal educational opportunity. Starting off as an elite academic institution, the high school has, throughout the century, successively added to its clientele--recent immigrants, students needing vocational training, jobless youth of the depression, the rural poor, and the economically and racially disadvantaged youth of our cities. Each time the clientele changed, the high school's educational problem grew, and so did its concomitant social responsibilities (Krug). Moreover, these successive additions to its clientele as well as the advent of different social needs have pushed the high schools into educational offerings that have a broadly social rather than an academic significance--offerings that range from driver education to drug education.

The high school has had other demands placed on it besides that of developing broader "socially relevant" curricula. Its *custodial* mission is enshrined in every state's attendance and school-calendar laws and regulations (Lawyer's Committee) and in the social and economic arrangements of millions of families and a good portion of the labor market. Perhaps the high school's discipline problem stems in part from its very success in holding most young people in school and not just from new child-rearing practices or teacher's abdication of disciplinary responsibility in the classroom.

Integration of students from different social classes and ethnic groups, also a social function of the high school, has continuously posed problems for the institution, from Elmstown to South Boston. The comprehensive high school has provided students with the potential of meeting others from different backgrounds, but has also segregated them by social class in its curriculum. In the past ten years, high schools have experienced increased interracial tensions, especially those brought on by court-ordered desegregation; their unenviable task was to create and maintain a constructive educational environment for youth of disparate

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overrun with a mix of young people from inconsistent social backgrounds. This is a difficult circumstance. The pressure of these forces exhausts the strength of the high school as an organized institution. It must be remembered that the high school is only one of the agencies of society and works at the socialization process while striving to accomplish its prime function: the education of youth in both the cognitive and affective domains."

experience thrust together involuntarily. The high schools were not well prepared for this challenge and their success has been understandably modest (National Opinion Research Center; Montgomery).

Withal, the scope of the high school's mission should not be exaggerated. Part of the current problem may be that high school educators do not put high priority on these social missions (compared to academic instruction), and thus do not devote adequate economic or psychic resources to them. Moreover, in the reports' discussions of divestiture of burdens, there are few alternatives proposed for other institutions to assume these extra-instructional responsibilities.

Summary

Beginning as intensively academic institutions, high schools have taken on a broad range of missions to perform for growing proportions of youth having ever-changing needs and experiences. If youth are becoming more frustrated and alienated, or less well-educated, high schools may be partly to blame; but it is difficult to know the extent to which they are implicated, compared to other institutions in our society.

A bureaucratized institution is one encumbered by standard operating procedures and inertia in the face of change. Given the dearth of recent systematic research on secondary schools, it is difficult to assess with any certainty the degree to which this bureaucratic model adequately protrays their reality. Teacher behavior is determined by professional norms rather than by the requirements of the institution. The lack of clarity of their "technology" necessitates teacher autonomy rather than rigid adherence to hierarchical dictates, and teachers' authority derives in important part from their knowledge and expertise. Certainly the departmentalization and subject matter orientation of secondary teachers makes them reluctant to embrace major reforms. This means that change is difficult to bring about, but not impossible. Similarly, images of the student as an unwilling client and the youth group as an adversary to the teacher and administration seem to be overdrawn. Students do respond to legitimate exercise of authority by the teaching staff, and often limit their peer group activities to peripheral aspects of schooling.

Just as there are different groups of adolescents in our society, there are different kinds of high schools. Although organizational regularities may abound, regional, sociological, and ethnic differences among secondary institutions also exist. Only a small percentage of American high schools, enrolling a sizable minority of students, are large (i.e., 1500 students or more). It is these schools that are most suitably described as bureaucratized. Since these schools are likely to be located in large metropolitan areas, their organizational dysfunctions are likely to be exacerbated by the pervasive problems of urban education.

Altogether, the reports' contentions about high schools are plausible; and each report finds at least limited support in the broader literature of adolescence and high schools. However, none of the evidence cited points conclusively to any specific reform. The reports' claims for the need for reform must be seen then to have arguments and values to buttress them, but not proofs.

THE PROPOSED REFORMS

Every decade or two, as the high school population changes, the American high school seems to face the same educational problem: How should it cope with students who are unlike the "typical" students the system had been designed to serve. Coping with diversity has always posed difficulties for schools. Attempts to deal with diversity have resulted in various strategies; such as: deemphasizing academics and emphasizing preparation for life; separating the curriculum into academic, vocational, and general tracks; trying to reestablish the importance of the individual with progressive education; and building comprehensive high schools to house students of all backgrounds in one building.

The current proposals for reform attempt to deal with these same issues. Underlying all of the proposals is the belief that no one institution, especially the current high school, can meet the needs of an increasingly heterogeneous clientele. The reports all believe that multiple locations and varied experiences are needed to overcome the segregation of youth from those who are older and younger than themselves.

An implication of the proposed reforms is a radical individualization of program, building a different educational experience for each student. These proposals are a logical extension of past high school reform movements that similarly confronted the problem of educating a diverse student population in one building. Whereas pedagogical modernization and broadening curricula offered a solution to past problems of meeting diverse student needs, the current movement seeks to meet these problems by extending alternatives beyond the boundaries of the high school.

Curricular Reform

The Brown and Martin reports propose a broad range of curricular reforms. Martin suggests that the school focus on teaching basic intellectual skills and citizenship, and that new programs of career and aesthetic education be developed outside the high school. Brown recommends that the school add career awareness and work explanation programs, global educational curricula, and introduce media and unbiased textbooks in the classroom.

We have no comment on the proposed new curricula except to say that they suit our values and apparently those of the panelists. We have already shown that new curricula have been effective mechanisms for changing the content of a high school education. But some curricular reforms are more feasible than others.

Efforts are already under way to make textbooks more representative of all segments of the population, but inducing teachers to cover certain suggested topics (such as rationality, orderly inquiry, etc.) may be more difficult. Although these skills are broadly applicable to most high-school subjects, getting teachers to concentrate on them in addition to or instead of their own subject matter may be difficult, unless sweeping changes are introduced into the content and structure of teacher training programs. Moreover, publishers will need some incentive to produce such books or materials, and we question whether a market for materials of this sort currently exists.

An even greater feasibility problem arises in connection with the Martin report's suggestion that a new citizenship education should include student participation (as observers and managers) in many aspects

of high school operations--facilitating an understanding of how governments and institutions operate. This could require a drastic change in the administration and faculty view of the student's role. Changing the student's role outside the classroom would, we suspect, also require changes in how the student is treated in the classroom. Teachers would have to learn how to interact with students who were assuming broader leadership roles in the school; students would have to learn how to handle their newly acquired responsibilities.

Reforms Suggesting Dispersion

The reports propose several organizational alternatives to the high school.* The net result of these proposals is that students would spend part of their time away from the high school in different learning environments. All the reports believe that the dispersion of adolescents to alternative learning environments in the workplace or elsewhere in the community is the best way to meet the needs of an increasingly heterogeneous student population** for both learning and socialization.

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*"A work situation can involve interdependent and collective tasks, experience with others differing in background and in age, and the experience of having others dependent on one's actions. Our general belief is that environments which provide a significant amount of serious and responsible work experience are much more likely to meet these objectives than are the narrower environments of school that most youth find themselves limited to. In addition, such work settings are intended to provide, to a much greater extent than reducing school size, the opportunity for adults outside schools to become enough involved with young persons that they constitute personal resources to whom the young persons can turn in times of stress." (Coleman report, p. 147)

"We recommend the creation of a Community Career Education Center. This agency would be the vehicle for new forms of vocational education such as reducing emphasis upon job training in the high school and increase work experience, on-the-job training, job-finding resources, and career information activities, all located and carried on in the community." (Martin report, p. 25)

"The variety of alternative schools in American education will be limited only by the legitimate needs of adolescents and the vivacity of the imagination of educational planners. Mobile schools, street academies, action education, academic and vocational apprenticeships, and schools without walls will all be components of a system of alternatives in secondary schooling." (Brown report, p. 101)

**"The heterogeneity of adolescents is greater than the present institutional structures of secondary education encompass.... The

The Coleman report also sees dispersion as a way to dilute the effect of the adolescent's peers.* The Brown report suggests that unwilling students might be better accommodated in alternative institutions than in high schools and given alternative paths to a diploma, so that high schools can renovate their curriculum and adequately educate the remainder of their clientele.

The educational effectiveness of the proposed diverse institutions is unknown and their feasibility is uncertain. First, someone or some organization needs to be responsible for keeping track of where the high school population is. We doubt that employers will readily assume this responsibility or that the educational community will relinquish it. The Martin panel recommends that an agency external to the school be responsible for helping students choose among a variety of educational programs; presumably it would also account for their whereabouts. This recommendation necessitates a drastic redefinition of firmly established educational roles and functions. Both Coleman and Brown suggest that the high school itself coordinate the various alternative programs proposed. This arrangement would be much more feasible, but probably much less adventurous.

The reports all assume that, once the high schools' responsibilities to provide work experience and other community-based learning environments for students have been "dispersed," the high school will be able to concentrate upon and improve its academic performance. This is an intuitively appealing assumption, but only an *assumption*--especially in the absence of prior success in the academic instruction of students who are not already academically inclined (i.e., middle-class and well-motivated).**

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institutions of adolescent education should strive to create an educational environment which honors and respects differences. This has been asserted but *not* honored in the United States for almost a century." (Martin report, p. 7)

*Coleman report, p. 152.

**Tantalizing, but distinctly partial, evidence to the contrary is the historical success of selected (often selective) urban high schools in providing academically excellent programs for segregated black youth (e.g., see Sowell).

Plans for the dispersion of youth to different programs must also deal with the training of teachers so they can utilize or participate in such programs. Careful planning is needed to keep track of students, to monitor operating costs, and to establish techniques for guaranteeing placements based on student needs and broad-based student participation in the programs.

As part of dispersion strategy, the reports suggest, the high school class period, school day, and school-leaving age should all be variable, depending on the requirements of the individual student; new credit criteria would also need to be developed for out-of-school experiences.

In this sense, the Brown report's proposal to lower the upper age limit for compulsory school attendance would be a dramatic step toward dispersion, and it forcefully raises some of the general problems with dispersion. The Brown report notes that a lowered school-leaving age should be implemented only *after* educational or training alternatives are fully available. But further safeguards may be called for: predetermined performance or experience (equivalency) criteria that will both uphold minimum skill standards and assure that different paths all lead to a decent credential; easy reentry into the standard high school program; and assurance that new school-leaving practices do not lead to either new forms of expulsion for unsuccessful students or--by contrast--a new form of confinement for them from which the bright and talented can more quickly escape.

In considering proposals for dispersion, the high schools must avoid a syndrome that has often affected American public education: labeling the reform as the "one best solution" to all problems (Tyack). Any one proposal may have different impacts on different groups of students. For instance, poorly motivated youth or minority youth or female youth may have more or less of the problems that the reports ascribe to "youth in high schools," and may need less dispersion, different patterns of dispersion, or no dispersion at all.

Age-Mixing

Both Coleman and Martin advocate establishing educational programs which involve people of various ages.* Coleman's recommendation centers on the integration of adolescents in workplace learning centers; Martin suggests creating subject-oriented schools--schools of the arts, writing, mathematics--where adults with various talents would share their skills with adolescents of different ages. Coleman also suggests cross-age tutoring as a learning activity for high school students.

Again, we can say little about the effectiveness of programs that mix old and young in centers of mutual interest. Some data indicate that adolescents who assume tutorial responsibility for younger children increase their own skills as much as they increase the skills of those they teach (Boocock, 1975). However, these were selected volunteers; many feasibility questions about this proposal can be raised. First, where are age-mixing programs to exist? In the high school? In the workplace? In new community-based programs?

The high school might, for example, be changed from an adolescent to a community center. A nursery school, having courses during the afternoon and evening for adults and student workers, and even programs

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*"With this strategy, organizations modified to incorporate youth would not have distinct and separate 'schools' within them to which youth are relegated. Persons of all ages in the organization would have a mixture of learning and working roles, with only the proportions of the mixture varying with age. All but the youngest persons would have a third role as well, teaching. Although there would be some persons in the organization with primary responsibility for teaching or directing the learning of young persons, a large portion of the teaching would be done by persons whose primary responsibilities were in other work." (Coleman report, p. 160)

"...that we inaugurate educational programs for the joint participation of adolescents and other interested and qualified adults in the community. Thus we call for pedagogical programs which may be designated *Participatory Education* (learning, by doing what is socially useful, personally satisfying and health-supporting for the individual and the community).

"We see three major areas of education that lend themselves to such combined participation--education in the arts, vocational education, and education in the operations of government." (Martin report, pp. 24-25).

for the elderly is not outside the realm of possibility. Such a range of programs would offer adolescents the opportunity to work with those both older and younger than themselves. A broadened base of participants, however, requires community interest and support. It is one thing to conceive of a program and another to find financial resources and interested participants. Similarly, given the reports, concern about the many social responsibilities the high school currently bears, we wonder how readily it might take on the additional job of becoming the center of age-mixing policies.

As to the labor market, we believe that incentives or subsidies would be needed to get employers to set up educational programs in the workplace. Older workers would need time off the job to teach their skills and would also need to be willing to participate in such a program. Given the past performance of private industries in government-sponsored programs for the unemployed (see Section III), we do not expect them to become large-scale educators.

The establishment of community-based learning centers for both aesthetic development and skills-learning would need new funding and community support, cooperation from teachers, and coordination with the high school and workplace.

Smaller Schools

The reports are unanimous in their contention that schools are too large. They recommend that smaller educational units be created,*

*"One possible approach is to attempt to combine the advantages of the large place at its best (economies of scale, a wide array of programs, the excitement of an educational city) with the advantages of the small place at its best (a sense of deep involvement, interpersonal trust and loyalty, a unifying and motivating institutional tone). Two directions of change seem particularly fruitful to pursue. One is dual membership in the small and the large through small units within large schools.... The second direction is dual membership in the small and the large through attendance in two distinct schools. Participation can be split, in various combinations of hours and days and weeks, between large comprehensive and small specialized schools." (Coleman report, p. 155)

"We also recommend the establishment of small, flexible and short-term, part-time schools open to all those qualified and interested." (Martin report, p. 28)

but do not recommend simply that schools housing 2000 students divide and become two institutions of 1000 students each, or four of 500. The reports suggest creating smaller alternative schools external to the school and subunits within the school. Since enrollments are declining, a third possibility exists: allow school sizes to decrease on their own.

We have indicated that although smaller schools have the potential of providing a more intimate environment, their cost is somewhat greater, and their effectiveness in other dimensions--achievement, student attitudes and expectations, and curricular comprehensiveness--seems to be little different than in larger schools.

Smaller schools may reduce the building-level bureaucratization, but may still be hampered in providing improved educational programs--unless they change the structure of courses, classes, and the school day. Every high school is embedded in a district hierarchy. Most school district administrations are centralized bureaucracies; their ability to manage and orchestrate the needs of many smaller educational units will determine how much freedom and flexibility these new units will have.

It is also not clear how a large-scale system of alternative small schools would allocate students: By choice? On first-come, first-served basis? By lottery? Regardless of the method, assignment practices should ensure that students are not resegregated by class or race.

Community and Student Participation in Governance

The reports recommend that educators reconsider the roles of the community and of students.* They suggest that the community help determine educational goals (Brown) and that students actively participate in governance and decisionmaking (Martin).

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*Recommendation No. 23: Code of Student Rights and Obligations (Brown report, p. 126).

"Schools themselves must be collateral training places for such immediate participation in society. Student participation with faculty and administration in the affairs of the school that affect students should not be a governance charade under adult sufferance. New models of responsibility-taking by youth are imperative. If we manage schools by fiat, we train citizens in docility, revolt or indifferent submission. The goal is selfhood and active citizenship, which cannot be served or reached by persons engaged in the conduct of their lives." Martin report, p. 27)

Community participation in school governance and goal-setting has had a checkered career since the mid-1960s, when community control controversies rocked many big-city school systems. What is most interesting is that the Brown panel's recommendation of community participation grows out of the conclusion that there is no other likely source of educational goals for the local high school. This represents a growing inclination by educators to seek community participation.

There is no evidence, however, that educators are ready to reexamine their views about students and implement policies allowing students a greater role in school governance. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students sought involvement during the later 1960s and early 1970s but soon lost interest. This may indicate a fundamental apathy or simply the capacity of the school's bureaucracy to make participation ineffective or meaningless. It, at the least, suggest that students probably would need careful training in the rights and obligations attendant on a more active learning and governance role. Changes would also have to occur simultaneously in the authority structure within classrooms and the division of educational tasks. The National Association of Secondary School Principal's Model Schools Program has been laboring on such a program for ten years. Reports from those involved suggest that these changes are possible, but are achievable only slowly and with much work and patience.

These suggestions for greater student responsibility occur at a time when student discipline and school violence are becoming problems of major concern. How many school administrators will be willing to lessen their hold, in the hope of developing student initiative, when their own inclinations (and community sentiment) suggest that they tighten control, increase security personnel, and monitor student movement?

Summary

The reports' educational reforms are aimed at meeting students' needs in a more effective way. The primary thrust is to recognize individual differences in youth and promote a flexibility that will enable high schools to be more responsive than they are now. Proposals to lessen age-grading, to establish student performance criteria, and to

create smaller schools are all moderate steps in that direction; but each has some possibility of creating new categories of "losers"--those who are far older than others in a class, those who cannot perform by testable criteria, and those who never meet and learn from persons of a different class, race, or interest.

The proposals for dispersion of students have similar objectives and similar but larger problems in meeting the needs of students having weak motivation or difficult-to-diagnose needs. Without school-leaving criteria, constructive and available alternatives, and flexible reentry, reforms entailing dispersion might easily be harmful to many students.

Student participation in school governance may have slightly favorable direct educational effects, but will have major implications for the division of authority in schools and will consequently be hard to implement. Greater community participation may be necessary (and will have to be acknowledged as such by educators) to keep individual school programs aligned with the educational goals of the community.

REMAINING PROBLEMS

In this subsection we point out some problems of high schools that the panel reports attend to insufficiently. We also try to point out certain areas of inconsistency in the various recommendations for reform.

Bureaucracy

As we have noted, the reports tend to emphasize the bureaucratic nature of the high school, and often overdraw the characterization along the way. The problems of bureaucratic practice and the inertia it engenders are real enough; yet, the reports, in our view, offer few meaningful suggestions as to how these problems can be remedied. Examine the suggestions they offer: curriculum reform, individualization, smaller size, community involvement, age-integration, student power. Essentially, all are exhortations rather than solutions. Without radical shifts in basic power relationships within schools, achievable only by thoroughgoing changes in institutional structure, the proposed recommendations may simply result in an adding on of programs rather than in true reform.

An irony lies in the panels' labeling of schools as bureaucratic institutions which resist change and the proposing that they adopt reforms at variance with their institutional interests. They offer scant analysis of the attitudes of those affected or of how these attitudes might be modified or incentives provided so as to encourage appropriate change. Thus, we question the internal feasibility of many of the recommendations.

Different Places, Different Problems

The reports' supposition that all high schools and all high school students share basic problems serves to obscure specific and serious problems that affect some high schools and some students more than others. The most obvious example is the urban high school, which has a range of distinctive problems (Havighurst et al). Urban schools are much more likely to be large (over 2000 students) and some are truly huge (over 4000). They usually have more students, poorer facilities, and less extensive programs than their suburban counterparts. Most urban students are not involved in extracurricular activities and the incidence of violence and disorder is high. Urban high schools have also had recent and sometimes turbulent experience with decentralization and community participation. Moreover, urban high schools are themselves by no means uniform. They vary greatly in social and ethnic composition and consequently vary in their experience of many of the above phenomena. We question whether the recommended reforms would be more necessary or less, would have greater effect or less in these high schools--or in the schools of any of several other subcategories (e.g., rural, white working-class, or predominantly black).

Teacher Attitudes and Behavior

The lack of attention to the actors in the educational endeavor becomes particularly acute in the case of teachers. Many of the problems that the reports correctly identify have their roots in the ways teachers perceive their missions, react to their students, and practice their profession. Yet no important suggestions are advanced for altering teacher training, motivation, monitoring, or evaluation. If the

faculty, and an aging faculty at that, is to remain as it is, few of the remedies proposed will have a chance of successful implementation.

Social Segmentation Within the Schools

A concentration on individualization, earlier school-leaving, work orientation, and small size may have the unintended consequence of exaggerating the differences in the educational experience of students from different social and ethnic backgrounds. One of the aims of comprehensiveness was that it would advance the commonality of experience and, in the process, bring disparate groups into closer and, it was hoped, more productive contact.

The point has importance for more than intergroup understanding. If basic educational treatment is to be more closely tied to the measured abilities and expressed desires of students, there is real danger that students will become more severely segregated in their educational contacts, and that this will reduce prospects for social mobility. In other words, the reports ignore the potentially inequitable consequences of their proposals.

On a related point, the reports are strangely silent. The real revolution American high schools have lived through in the past 15 years has been the racial one. Whether because of planned desegregation or changing racial residential patterns, many high school students have a much higher level of contact with members of other racial groups. This has necessitated profound adjustments by teachers and administrators as well as by students. Yet the reports give little hint of the relationships between these increased interracial contacts and the other problems the reports identify. Nor do they tell us much about the role of the integration and equal-opportunity objectives in relationship to the changes that they recommend.

School Security

Perhaps the most curious of all the omissions in the reports is their failure to deal with the problems of school disorder and violence. All of the data (Bailey, cited by Brown; and NCCE) conduce to the view

that this is an accelerating phenomenon, the explanations for which are far from clear. Winnowing out potentially troublesome students by lowering the legal school-leaving age or by sending them to off-campus jobs hardly constitutes a comprehensive solution. We have not set out to study school security or the school's responsibility for the safety and good conduct of its charges, and thus we can offer no suggestions as to how this problem may be alleviated. We merely remark that by virtually ignoring the problem, the authors of the reports diminish the credibility of the recommendations they do make.

Trade-offs Among Objectives

The reports offer suggestions, proposals, and recommendations but tell us little about the relative worth of each. They tell us even less about the comparative cost--in resources, time, energy, and commitment--of achieving a particular objective. In a world of limited and, perhaps for education, actually shrinking resources, the consumer of the reports deserves to be informed about priorities and costs. The authors were not charged with developing full-scale systems analyses, with all of their attendant cost/effectiveness and feasibility considerations, but obviously (as the Coleman and Martin reports suggest), such developmental studies are needed as the next step in consideration of the proposed reforms.

V. POLICY ANALYSIS

(Michael Timpane)

We have now examined the findings and recommendations of the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports from three perspectives: the social development of youth, the relationship of youths in school to the labor market, and the operations of secondary schools. Our next task is to estimate what policy-makers should do with all this information. We will limit ourselves to the implications for policy affecting high schools. For economy's sake, we will first ask the question: Have the described phenomena and the policy problems posed by the reports maintained their significance since 1972, and what is their likely trend in the next several years? It is possible that some of the problems may be vanishing; if so, certain recommended changes may be irrelevant. Next, we will consider the nature of public and professional support for the intended reforms. Finally, we will suggest which of the reports' policy recommendations should be seriously considered, what other reforms not advocated by the reports should be considered, and which levels of government should do what. In specifying what should be done at the federal level, we will identify desirable changes in existing programs, possible new programs, and important research that needs to be done.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT TRENDS

The nature and magnitude of the problems of youth and of their schools described in the three reports were attributed to a complex interaction of people, places, and events: rapid increases in the age cohorts, expectation of high economic returns from education, changing developmental patterns, existing institutions, and specific historical trends. How have these dynamic forces developed since 1972? How has the historical context changed?

Demographic Shifts

As the writers of the reports acknowledge, the pace of demographic growth in the youth cohort had slowed by 1972, and would continue to slow; by 1980, demographic growth will stop and a gradual decline in absolute number of persons aged 14 to 24 will begin (Coleman). In the younger part of the age group, however, decline has already begun. High school enrollments have begun to decline and will have declined by 3 million students, or 15 percent, by 1983 (*Projections of Education Statistics*). The ratio of youths to adults which Coleman suggests is related to the difficulty of aggregate socialization processes) will decline by almost 21 percent between now and 1985. For schools, the implications of this declining enrollment have come sharply into focus; there will be some surcease from the problems of an expanding clientele; school officials will now have to decide whether to close and consolidate school buildings; they will less often be involved in building new schools. Fewer new teachers will be hired. Average staff age will probably increase and staff turnover decline, since most teachers were hired during the boom 1950s and 1960s and are not yet near retirement. Programs to improve the capacities of existing staff will become more important and more challenging. High schools, colleges, and other educational institutions can be expected to step up their competition for scarce students and blur the line between secondary and post-secondary education.

Labor Markets

Since 1972, there has been an abrupt downturn in the economic benefits of higher education (Freeman, 1974b). The post-Vietnam years have brought a late surge of the young into the labor market from the Armed Services as well as from undergraduate and graduate schools.

For the time being, recession aside, entry-level managerial slots are congested, and college-educated workers are spilling over into jobs that were previously the preserve of high school graduates (see Section III). Moreover, under the pressure of equal employment regulations, white males have had to compete more seriously with minorities and women for placement and advancement. Even assuming a buoyant

economy, it will take a long time for market adjustment mechanisms to absorb the bulge of young workers and to permit rates of economic return to bounce back somewhat. In the meantime, we may expect some increase in job dissatisfaction among those workers who will feel "overqualified" for their jobs. This may feed the increasing absolute and relative demand for adult and recurrent education programs if these workers try to inch their way up the job ladder by adding credentials. Although we do not know how these developments will, in net, affect college enrollments, which depend on more than these economic factors, we do not expect markedly high enrollments.

Developmental Trends

Lately, indices of physiological development by age have stabilized (Coleman, 1974a). The emotional demands of adjusting to a modern technological society have not changed greatly in these few years, but increasing suicide rates and mental health services for the young suggest these demands may be getting slowly more oppressive. Future changes are essentially unpredictable. Patterns of cognitive development may be affected by both physiological and emotional maturation processes, but changes in the near future are both unlikely and unpredictable. For educational institutions, there will be no great relief from the strains in pedagogical and disciplinary practice that past developmental changes have introduced. But there may be fewer surprises and fewer changes introduced by the attendance of added segments of the adolescent population, and an opportunity to absorb and adjust to recent changes in our understanding of the processes of maturation.

Attitudes of Youth

There were a variety of behavioral differences between youth of the 1960s and their earlier counterparts--for example, in relation to political activism, anti-adult rhetoric, attitudes toward work, premarital sexual relations, and drugs. Some of these behaviors have disappeared, as the events apparently producing them have ended. As the Vietnam war concluded, so virtually did campus political activism

and anti-adult rhetoric. Some attitudes of youth have begun to move back toward those of adults and youth in earlier decades--especially attitudes toward work and success. Adult and youth attitudes toward and use of all illegal drugs, except marijuana, seem to be very similar. Changes in attitudes toward some behaviors (e.g., premarital sexual relations) have remained, but adult cohorts are shifting values toward those of youth. Differences between adults and youth on questions of taste and manners persist.

Institutional Development

High schools today are hard to distinguish from high schools in 1971 and 1972. In size, curriculum, and patterns of attendance, they have changed little. They have neither reversed nor accelerated the gradual trends toward diversification (mini-schools, alternatives, work-study programs). Student protests have almost disappeared, although teacher protests (strikes) and parent protests (busing and textbook demonstrations) may have increased. Students' rights movements have atrophied. Reported levels of violence and disorder within schools are, however, rising (National Committee for Citizens in Education). The public's greatest concerns with schools continue to be discipline, racial integration, drug use, and rising costs and tax burdens (*The Gallup Polls of Attitudes toward Education: 1969-1973*). The curriculum and teachers are among their least concerns. Except for busing, elementary and secondary education policy has been an important, but not an urgent, public policy issue. The decline in the growth of the student population and the end of optimism about education as an agent of social and economic change have diminished the pressure for and public support of new revenues.

The two most active sources of change in the educational policy environment in recent years have been collective bargaining and judicial intervention; and their influence will persist. We expect that collective bargaining will continue to spread in American public education and that secondary school teachers will continue to be the stalwarts of union activity. The industry will accommodate and routinize collective-bargaining processes, and we may hope that, over

the long run, better grievance and negotiating procedures will heighten teacher morale and professional standards. But, for the next few years, we had best assume that collective bargaining processes will limit the high schools' capacity for innovation; any proposed reform will be more or less feasible according to whether or not organized teachers are likely to find it in their economic and organizational self-interest.

In recent years, the courts have expanded their areas of intervention into education policy. So far, they have persisted in ordering desegregation of secondary schools, often involving busing, sometimes across jurisdictional boundaries. The practical and political possibilities for additional busing may, however, be limited.

Other important areas of judicial intervention have been in school finance reforms, in defining students' rights, and in questioning the economic and legal basis of the current practice of requiring certain credentials, such as a high school diploma. Such pressures are likely to continue.

In short, the context of school reform for youth has changed in several major respects since 1972. Some of the changes were predictable, some were not. The net effect has been to cast considerable doubt as to the permanence of some of the trends to which the three reports reacted, and to diminish the sense of crisis associated with secondary education and the prospects for reform.

PROSPECTS FOR REFORM

Public Support for High School Reform

Assessment of the proposed high school reforms must include a review of the extent to which members of the public and the profession share the reports' general view of the problems and support the indicated direction of reform. Public and professional opinion can, of course, change unpredictably;* but it has been quite consistent on the

*Consider, for example, one conceivable shift in public opinion: concerns with rising levels of crime and violence in schools and continuing drug abuse problems could coalesce with concerns over apparently

question of school reform in the recent past. In 1970 and 1971, the public and high school students were asked about innovation in schools (see Table 10). About 20 percent of the national sample of the public felt that the schools were too little interested in trying new methods. High school students were less satisfied: 43 percent believed that the schools were not interested in change, and more than 50 percent believed that more change was needed. In answer to another question, students were more likely than the public to believe that teachers and curriculum were a "major problem" in schools.

There is more agreement among the public and students about how a high school education might be improved. Both the public and students agree that the high school is too academically oriented (see Table 11) and that more emphasis should be placed on preparing the non-college bound for jobs. Three-fourths of the students and more than half of the total sample believe that greater use should be made of educational opportunities outside the school. Fifty-six percent of the students, but only 33 percent of the total sample, believed there should be more time for independent study.

In 1972 and 1973, Gallup polls of new national samples, plus a small sample of educators, put forth specific suggestions for innovation that received strong support: career education was favored by 90 percent of both groups;* alternative high schools, by 62 percent of the public and 80 percent of the educators; smaller high schools, by 57 and 76 percent, respectively. Both groups heavily favored compulsory education to 16 years of age or higher.

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declining achievement standards, to produce a markedly new climate of opinion calling for stricter discipline, more expulsion from high school, and added concentration on basic reading and computational skills. In such an eventuality, the prospect for reforms like those reviewed here would change greatly.

*The NLS of 1972 high school graduates found that more help with job-finding, more emphasis on vocational-technical programs, and more practical work experience were leading concerns of high school seniors, surpassed only by the need for more basic math and reading help.

Table 10

ATTITUDES TOWARD CHANGE IN THE SCHOOLS:
THE RESULTS OF GALLUP SURVEYS
(Percentage of Sample)

Question	Respondent	Response			
		Not Interested	Too Ready	OK	Uncertain
Do you feel local public schools are not interested in trying new ways? (1970)	National Sample	20	21	32	27
	High School Students	43	19	34	4
		Not Enough	Too Many	OK	Uncertain
Are too many educational changes being tried? (1971)	National Sample	24	22	32	22
	High School Students	53	14	31	2

Table 11

RESPONSE IN A GALLUP SURVEY ON NEED FOR LESS ACADEMIC EMPHASIS IN SCHOOLS
(Percentage of Sample)

	Respondent	Response		
		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
Do you think the schools spend too much time in preparing students for college and not on occupations which don't require a college degree? (1971)	National Sample	68	23	9
	High School Students	61	35	4
Do you approve of schools reducing the amount of classroom instruction to make greater use of educational opportunities outside school? (1972)	National Sample	56	34	10
	High School Students	72	26	2

High school students would like to see themselves more actively involved in school decisionmaking, whereas parents seemed less inclined to think this is necessary. More than 75 percent of the students but only 40 percent of parents thought that students should have more influence on curriculum, school rules, and dress codes. Fifty percent of the students thought they should have more of a say about teachers, but only 20 percent of the parents thought so.

The public's support for innovation in general is lukewarm; students, however, are much bolder in their support of change. When specific changes like those put forth by the panel reports are proposed, many of them receive relatively strong support from the public and very strong support from students and educators.

Professional Support for Reform

Since the release of the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports, high school educators have indicated further agreement with their findings and proposals. The NASSP has reviewed the three reports thoroughly and developed a program of reform based on them (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975a). The high school principals accept many of the central premises of the reports, such as the heterogeneity of students and the dynamic complexity of the transition students undertake. They acknowledge the breakdown in societal consensus about the goals of adolescent development and agree that the high schools must, in consequence, end their political and bureaucratic isolation, and move out to discover and implement the changes that each community will continually require of them. On close examination, however, it becomes clear that the NASSP has cut and fit the proposed reforms in ways that assure that high school managers remain in the driver's seat. They believe workplace and other off-campus educational activities should remain under their control, with beefed-up, highly specialized guidance staff. Community involvement should be defined and managed by the secondary schoolmen, and community policy inputs will be more advisory than participatory in nature. Alternative programs and accelerated college courses should be created *within* the structure of the larger high schools. The unburdening of social missions is conceived

of mostly as the transfer from the high school to unnamed locations of those students who are unable to function educationally in the reoriented high school programs.*

The NASSP response has many constructive elements, but it leaves to the consideration of others (we will later suggest that they be federal or state policy-makers) several of the more substantial reforms suggested by the reports:

- Establishment of small, independent, specialized high schools.
- New institutions, such as youth communities and community arts, career, and guidance services.
- Financial instruments (vouchers or educational drawing rights) and reorganizations that would authorize and subsidize student choice in the purchase of education in the later secondary years and beyond.
- Extensive sharing of decisionmaking powers among school staff, students, and community.
- Systematic analysis of the allocation of responsibilities for the socialization and custody of high school age students among public and private institutions.

There is clearly wide support for mild versions of reforms that would make high schools more flexible and more in touch with the community and workplace. But reforms that would lessen the high school's grip on the process of secondary education may need substantial political support and economic resources to encourage or subsidize change.

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*Standing in some contrast to the NASSP platform are the recommendations of Task Force '74, *The Adolescent, Other Citizens, and Their High Schools*, a follow-on study to the Brown report. Composed of persons with community, school district, state, and research perspectives on secondary schooling, as well as principals, Task Force '74 is considerably more willing than NASSP to encourage extensive community participation in decisions, to envisage alternatives apart from the comprehensive high school, and to contemplate sharing potential students with post-secondary institutions. The NASSP representative on the task force dissented from the report in precisely these respects.

SUMMARY EVALUATION OF FINDINGS AND PROPOSALS

We have examined the logic and evidence in the three reports on youth and schooling and have often found both inadequate. In connection with most of their specific recommendations, we have lamented the absence of information on program design, feasibility, costs, and potential trade-offs among recommendations.

Our critique should *not* obscure the fact that these reports performed a great public service: They tried to crystallize vague but profound public concerns into clear-cut propositions about what is right and what is wrong with American youth and the institutions serving them. They raise fundamental questions about the impact of such factors as age-based segregation; delayed entry of youth into full-time adult roles; and changes in (or new understandings of) the patterns of physical, emotional, and cognitive development. They also bring to light more contextual but still basic phenomena--such as the pressures of very large cohorts of youth, a newly perceived bureaucratization of schooling, and the general unresponsiveness of the institutions serving youth cohorts. These are phenomena about which sustained thinking is too rarely available to policy-makers and analysts.

Methodologically, it is quite beyond the state-of-the-art to estimate the ultimate significance of these developments. We can only estimate how seriously events that have already occurred have affected either youth or the total society; but even such value judgments will leave open questions about the effect of past happenings upon the future behavior of a given youth cohort or upon the behavior of succeeding youth cohorts.

Nevertheless, the reports reached several far-reaching conclusions about our social arrangements for youth, and proposed many changes. In our review, we have found some of their conclusions to be more reasonable and consistent with the available evidence than others. Specifically, we conclude that:

- The heterogeneity of youth in physiological, cognitive, and psychological development at any given age or in any grouping has, as the reports suggest, substantial implications for policies that confine youth

to narrow age groups (i.e., grades) and batch-process on that basis.

- The lowering of the age of puberty and the raising of the age for assuming adulthood has, as the reports say, prolonged the average period of adolescence. Society's adjustment to the longer period of adolescence has been incomplete. Youth does not have a clearly defined role during these years, especially when many adolescents are ready to proceed to adulthood quickly. However, for all adolescents, the prolongation is partly a response to new options available to them and of the time needed to choose wisely. Youth's transition should include more opportunities to exercise progressive independence, to bridge the gap between in-school dependency and out-of-school freedom. The period of youth should not be deliberately shortened.

- The advent of universal secondary education and large-scale college attendance has separated most youth from other social settings for considerable amounts of time, and the separation of home and workplace in adult life has compounded the problem. What is less clear is the reports' contention that these developments have contributed to unstable youth cultures and greater intergenerational conflict.

- The peer group--which the reports see as a largely negative social force, promoting emotional and physical conflict and exaggerated concern about trivial matters among its members, and impeding institutional performance--is a less pervasive influence on youth than the reports suggest. The peer group also performs positive functions, helping youth to achieve identity and autonomy; it even contributes to their education of one another.

- Many of the structural characteristics attributed to high schools--such as bureaucratization and uniformity of program--are overdrawn, but only a little. High schools have shown a limited capacity to diversify and to change, especially in improving curricula. Some high schools, but not a majority, are also "too large" in the sense that their very size promotes impersonal routine handling of students.

- The reports overemphasize the potential of the workplace, both as an educative and as a socializing force. High schools have long had sizable and not wholly successful work-related education programs. The expansion of these programs on a large scale

into public or private industry work settings would be more difficult than the reports suggest. Moreover, most school youth think work is very important and are already working, although the quality of many youth jobs is low. One commodity that does seem to help youth to make occupational choices, more than specific skill training, is information on the nature of available alternatives.

- The reports are unwarrantably preoccupied with the problems of white, male, middle-class youth. To be sure, many of this class manifested unexpected, often hostile and aggressive, behavior in the 1960s, but less so today. Analyses that, in effect, set aside temporarily the known problems of black, female, and working class youth, must be looked at very skeptically by analysts who are trying to decide whether the findings pertain to these major subgroups of youth and who wish to determine whether or not the proposals for reform will benefit them.

It is from this summary perspective that we assess the reports' major recommendations.

Dispersion

We believe that there are substantial grounds to support the reports' perception that high school youth should have more opportunity to encounter and learn from the workplaces and aesthetic/expressive activities taking place in their communities. Undoubtedly today's youth find it difficult to match their aptitudes and interests against the opportunities and requirements for various careers and adult pursuits, and to derive therefrom plans for further personal development. It seems clear, too, that the information transmission system in general and the high schools in particular are inherently limited in their abilities to assist in this process. Such individual decisions must be made partly on actual experience. However, we think dispersion proposals intended to "defuse" uncontrollable youth are unnecessary.

In time, if well done, dispersion strategies will have additional indirect benefits by diminishing the historic political and bureaucratic isolation of school systems from other community functions and diminish their academic bias, by providing equally valued

alternatives. It will also bring into focus the need (discussed below) for the school, or some other social institution, to assist non-college-bound students in their transition to the world of work.

We would suggest two serious constraints to the dispersion process: that it not try to serve the purpose of hastening the entry of youth into career channels, and that it not be, in its operation, inequitable among different types of students. We do not believe the case for shortening the period of youth or adolescence has been made. We believe that young people require considerable time and room for trial-and-error in their adjustment to our complex and changing society and its economy; we suggest that schools may be a valuable buffer and student peer groups may contribute more constructively to the adjustment process than the reports indicate. The proposed alternative socializer, the workplace, does not automatically recommend itself to us. Much of our society's productive activity contributes little to individual fulfillment (Behn et al.; Terkel) and many of the work experiences that might be made available to students are now and are likely to remain similarly unrewarding. More than is recognized, young persons (75 percent of whom hold jobs during high school) may understand all they need to know about such jobs.

Would-be dispersion plans must also be reviewed for their equity implications. Dispersion in the wrong hands becomes disposal. The Brown report suggestion that some students who are not profiting from high school might be better off elsewhere is disturbing in the degree that it might, despite the policy-makers' honorable intent, "dump" many of the least adequate students into various unproductive jobs in the community.

Finally, without sizable subsidy to the host firms and institutions, we doubt that sufficient work experiences can be located for the whole high school population.* Nor will it be easy to design

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*It would seem important, on this score, to review federal regulations relating to health care, child care, and other federally-supported or -regulated social services, to be sure that *they* do not impede the employment of young workers.

systems to assign and keep track of large numbers of newly itinerant students.

Dispersion programs should then be individualized, voluntary, and highly exploratory for both the student and the school. When and if they are adopted, compulsory requirements for out-of-school experiences should be flexible and general in nature rather than specific. They should never be allowed to have the purpose or removing troublesome students from the ambit of the school's educational responsibilities.

Individualization and Flexibility

It is difficult to argue against individualization and flexibility in secondary education programs. Most of the more substantial reforms tried in the last two decades--team teaching, differential staffing, mini-courses, mini-schools, modular scheduling, independent study, cooperative education, media-center programs, and so on--have these characteristics. The evidence within the reports on the developmental heterogeneity of youth in our complex society reinforces the arguments for individualization: now we can see just how true it is that "no two students are alike." The main feature the reports add is to take these developments outside the school building.

We believe that the degree of individualization implied in the reports' suggested reforms reveals several underlying dangers. The proposed reforms would ultimately require no less than a comprehensive educational diagnosis and treatment plan for each high school student in order to determine the unique and optimal mix (in both substance and timing) of school, work experience, and other personal development. Such a program would be worth the effort only if it satisfied four difficult (and familiar) conditions: (1) it should embody general agreement about the needs of high school youth; (2) it should utilize effective tools of diagnosis; (3) it should have effective ways of carrying out what is prescribed; and (4) it should be equitable in practice.

Meeting the first condition would entail marked changes in the preconceptions of many secondary educators. Traditional academic

achievement norms would be partly replaced by norms valuing, for example, out-of-school experience and students' achieving personal autonomy in their educational lives. Conceptions about subject-matter mastery would also have to be altered to suit individual needs. These goals may be unattainable for most high schools. We see little basis for assuming that school staffs will have either the desire or the ability to change their ways of thinking and operating to this extent. Nor is the public likely to be enthusiastic: the educational gains of individualization have never been demonstrated by ordinary achievement measures, and the difficulties in maintaining control and discipline of minor citizens will seem and probably will be, substantial.

The second necessary condition is that educational institutions be able to diagnose the individual student's needs effectively. This requirement seems to us far beyond the state-of-the-art. Reliable measurement tools of this nature simply do not exist. If invented, their utility for both middle-class and disadvantaged students needs to be demonstrated, and their successful administration would require staff training and re-training programs of a previously undreamed-of effectiveness. Similarly, the third necessary condition would imply parallel curricular and pedagogical changes, not to mention the existence (doubtful, as we have argued above) of a myriad of appropriate out-of-school experiences.

None of the above reservations would necessarily stay the usual American inclination to "try this out and see how it works"--but the possibility that these steps will heighten inequities in secondary education should give us some pause. If perceptions and attitudes need to be changed, they need to be changed most as they affect disadvantaged and minority students. If new measurements and programs need to be developed, developing them for minority and disadvantaged students will be most difficult. And, if there is any trade-off between the new individualized programs and previous priorities aimed at producing uniform programs of a standard quality for all students, the students most at risk are the disadvantaged and those from minorities, whose successful acquisition of the basic competencies that

traditional programs aim to produce is both more recent and less complete. Moreover, in many urban and rural high schools that serve high proportions of disadvantaged students, the prospects for successful reforms along these lines may be slim indeed. There may be fewer resources in the school and in the surrounding community to provide desirable kinds of new educational experiences.

In light of the above, the following points summarize our views on some of the specific suggestions for individualization and flexibility of program.

Smaller Units of Secondary Schooling. No one is recommending that high schools should be larger. The arguments for drastically smaller schools, however, are not that compelling. Smaller schools are assumed to impart desirable flexibility in the educational program as a whole, but they may also impose limitations on the amount of different courses available to students within them. They may be somewhat more socially supportive for individual students, but run the risk of being class- and race-segregated. In an era of declining enrollments, however, school districts should not worry if their large high schools get gradually smaller. Little will be lost in comprehensiveness, flexibility, efficiency, or class- and race-desegregation, and something may be gained in the creation of a more human scale of activity. Sub-schools may enhance these gains a bit further without adverse effects, and a limited number of alternative high schools, serving the highly distinctive needs of specific small proportions of the student population, need not disturb the desired patterns of secondary schooling.

Performance Criteria, Credit for Experience, and School-Leaving Requirements. Performance criteria for basic and measurable skills of reading and arithmetic seem feasible, provided they are attached to a high school program that seeks such objectives. A system of credit for experience will be necessary in order to give appropriate value-for-time-spent to many of the suggested out-of-school educational programs. Defining either performance- or experience-criteria will present challenging practical and political problems. Much of the ultimate success of such programs will depend upon how employers

and institutions of higher education receive such credentials. For employers in particular, a carefully designed credential, including certification of basic skills, successful completion of work-related experiences, and academic achievement in selective areas of particular interest to the student, should be superior to the present diploma, which sometimes betokens little more than patience and a certain minimal ability to live within a set of rules.

Establishing these new ways of accumulating credit should lead naturally to greater discretion in the timing of high school completion. Several states, such as California, are well-advanced on this road, and secondary educators seem eager to pursue moderate versions of it. The principal danger is one that we referred to earlier: hard-to-educate students may be steered too readily toward out-of-school programs and, at the end, offered cheap, useless credits and credentials. This danger leads to an even more alarming prospect: serious consideration may be given to the Brown report's recommendation that the compulsory school age be lowered dramatically, without attending to that report's caveat that such consideration must "follow, not precede" the development and installation of alternative programs that will provide students who leave early with the skills to assume adulthood.

If secondary education moves in any considerable degree toward programs of dispersion with some performance criteria and credit for experience, concern for ensuring an adequate supply of out-of-school experiences and concern for equity should lead to serious consideration of proposals for *educational drawing rights* or *life-long vouchers* that will be available to students in the later years of high school, and remain available for use through college and adult years. We have previously mentioned that some subsidy will be required to foster enough out-of-school positions for students; drawing rights would be one form such subsidy might take. Colleges and universities are already seeking qualified high school students for early admissions and will continue to do so as the number of potential entrants begins to decline. Drawing rights would ensure that financial assistance was available to economically disadvantaged qualified high

school students who were as eager as the well off to accelerate their education. They could also be designed so that employers had some incentive to welcome and train disadvantaged students.

The notion of drawing rights bristles with problems of political and administrative feasibility, standards for eligibility and for the amount of the award, redemption for non-use, and cost. But we believe that educational drawing rights would facilitate the proposed reforms. Concerns for their political feasibility and cost might be reduced by keeping their use limited and under some degree of school system control during the high school years. These and other questions will, however, require design and feasibility testing.

Curriculum Reform

In this analysis, we have not focused much attention on the merits of the proposed curricular reforms. Our only observation is: to the extent that the reforms call for interdisciplinary planning and programs or depend upon significant change in the student role (as in the Martin report's call for schools as laboratories for citizenship), the same problems of organizational feasibility will attend these reforms as attend those involved in the basic moves toward dispersion and individualization.

Reforms in Governance

The Brown report observes that national consensus on the goals of secondary education has diminished and perhaps evaporated. This observation is crucial. It illuminates the quandary of secondary educators who are trying to set priorities; and it justifies recommendations to expand local educational planning by having more participation by students and community groups--rather than assuming that educators embody a nationally agreed-upon vision. However, such local planning is likely to be confusing and fraught with personal and institutional conflicts. Local consensus on educational goals usually exceeds the degree of national consensus by only a little, and the new differences in interest that appear among educators, parents, and students may signal an increase rather than a decrease in the net amount

of local community discontent with high schools. In the final analysis, if the planning were ineffective or dominated by institutional interests, still greater alienation would result. Increasingly, however, well-educated and restive communities will make such participation inevitable, if major high school reforms are to be attempted.

In pursuing the proposed reforms, at least two other aspects of governance also merit careful review: developing staff so that it is capable of performing new functions and defining institutional responsibilities for the custody of youth.

We have alluded several times to future difficulties in staff development. Over the next several years, the teaching staffs in high schools will be older, more senior in years of service, and more unionized. There will be less staff growth and less turnover. Salary settlements will do well to keep pace with using costs of living, and opportunities for advancement to administrative slots will diminish. Past programs of in-service development have no record of effectiveness. Innovation in high schools seemingly can occur only with the full and continued cooperation of the teaching staff. Simply put, high school reforms will stand or fall depending upon the cooperation of high school teachers--and their cooperation will have as its price their defining the extent of the reforms and helping determine who controls them. Successful staff development plans that will produce the desired reforms must: (1) enable teachers to regard their roles, vis-a-vis students and community, differently and enable them to function effectively in new situations; and (2) enjoy at least the tolerance--and the cooperation--of teacher organizations. This is a tall order, but one that would-be reformers must try to fill.

As indicated previously, all three reports underrate the importance of the high school's function of keeping custody of over ten million minors. Our society and economy keep the young *and* one or more parent absent from the home for many hours, most days of the week. Without specific assurance of who--schools, workplaces, diverse community organizations--will be responsible for the safekeeping of both the persons and the rights of youth, many parents and other members of the public will seriously question the proposed reforms.

Youth and the Workplace

The reports (especially that of Coleman) all suggest that stable, socially productive job-holding is a major attribute of adulthood; they are concerned that neither schools nor the youth society prepares young people to function well in this respect. They would give youth greater opportunity than they presently have to combine or alternate school and work so that they can continuously seek personal development consistent with the constraints and opportunities that they will face in the workplace. As we have said, such programs could indeed help many students, provided that they do not further segregate youths by class or talent and are not pushed to the point where they force students to make premature or irrevocable choices. But, a full set of reforms concerning the school-work connection must also deal with the efficiency of labor markets directly; for instance:

- The quality of many jobs available to young workers is low and may contribute as much as schooling or age segregation to alienation among the young.
- Youth employment is especially sensitive to changes in the quantity of jobs, i.e., to national economic policy.
- In the case of young blacks (as well as other minorities), discrimination, discouragement, and lack of information about or geographical access to jobs create problems above and beyond those of most other youth.

Various legislative restrictions mentioned in the reports--such as minimum wage and child-labor laws and employers' costs in contributory benefit systems--reduce the efficiency of the labor market somewhat, but attacking them frontally seems insufficient and, in any event, may be less effective than stimulating a direct demand for labor. What is needed that the reports do not provide is some systematic analyses and recommendations concerning the problems youths encounter in entering the labor market.

High schools might have some modest success in improving labor market performance if they were to assume responsibility for job placement of non-college-bound students. No other institution has that responsibility. Students, especially minority students, lack both

information and advice in their initial job search; success in job placements could serve, in the long run, as one demonstrable outcome of schooling that could be used to evaluate and measure the diverse nonacademic activities of these proposed reforms. It is not likely that existing counselors would have the training or desire to concentrate successfully in this mission. Thus, new skills and procedures most probably will have to be invented.

WHO SHOULD DO WHAT?

One of the flaws common to the commission mode of analysis is that no decisionmakers have any obligation to pay attention to commission recommendations. Such has been the case with these reports. The professional association of secondary school principals is trying to develop a new reform program from them, but local, state, and federal policy-makers have given them little systematic attention.

Everything we have said so far would suggest a cautious response to the reports' recommendations--but they should not be ignored. Further, as the Coleman report admits, many of these proposals might best be viewed as suggestions for experimentation. Moreover, for some levels of policy-making (e.g., state governments), the need may be for regulatory and legislative action to enable reform rather than for the design and operation of specific new programs. At this stage, the approach to reform at every level should be systematic but distinctly exploratory.

School Districts and Local Educational Officials

Local school officials will determine the specific nature of program reforms in the 25,000 individual secondary schools. It will be mostly up to them to decide how much dispersed, individualized education their high school students should have. Only they can provide appropriate resources and conclude the appropriate arrangements with community groups and private organizations. Only they can determine whether new modes of planning--with the community and with students--are valuable or sham. In making their plans for reform, however, local officials should be very careful to consider:

- o The availability of appropriate out-of-school experiences (especially jobs that will have the desired educational value).
- o Availability of valid and acceptable measures for performance and experience out-of-school.
- o Systems to keep track of the students who are in and out of school.
- o Indicators of the impact and effectiveness of reforms on various classes of students.
- o Staff development strategies that will help teachers and administrators to succeed in new activities.
- o The cooperation of teacher organizations.
- o Costs.

States

Without state-level activity, local school responses are likely to be haphazard and without broad effect across district lines. Many school districts will be discouraged by restrictive state requirements or simply by past state practice. The likely result will be that those school districts that are most venturesome and whose secondary programs are most stimulating and least in need of reform--the so-called lighthouse districts--will be those that try it. This pattern of innovation has not been an efficient channel for a wide dissemination of school reforms (Ford Foundation; Berman and McLaughlin).

State activities could include categorical programs to promote high school reforms, but the more fundamental need is to review and, where desirable, amend state-level requirements--of constitutional, legislative, and administrative origin--that prevent desirable changes in secondary education programs. The areas of concern will include:

- o Institutional accountability for students, including compulsory attendance laws, definitions of attendance, responsibilities for choice, liability for students' health and safety off-campus, etc.
- o Establishing and upholding criteria for skill performance or nonschool educational experience that will complement traditional criteria for academic credit.
- o Accrediting teachers and other educating persons, and supervising publicly supported educator-training

institutions so that newly desired skills are provided and recognized professionally.

- o Allowing payments to nonschool institutions for services to students.
- o Overseeing collective bargaining patterns within the state to assure that they do not unnecessarily constrain desirable patterns of reform.

To launch such an extensive reconsideration of established policies, in a context where the effects of the reform are largely unknown, seems to us to call for statewide deliberation. Several states (including California, North Carolina, Oregon, and Florida) have made such consideration, either by staff or by their own commissions, and have installed some of the suggested reforms (notably, performance criteria for basic educational skills and earlier exit based on competency). Other states interested in considering the proposed reforms might well launch such formal across-the-board consideration of the problems of high schools--all the while keeping their eye on the forerunners to see what experience shows about intended and unintended consequences.

The Federal Role in Secondary School Reforms

The federal government has two traditional roles in American education policy that it might fulfill in response to the proposals of the Coleman, Martin, and Brown reports: capacity-building grants for priority and problem areas, and research.

Capacity-Building. As the Martin report suggests, the problems of secondary education have received scant attention in federal education programs. Only vocational and career education policies have directly affected high school programs. It is impossible to establish criteria to prove a federal interest in particular areas of educational policy, but the reform of secondary education seems, on its face, a nationally significant issue, with obvious implications for national economic policy, systems of criminal justice, and higher education policies, to name a few. A capacity-building grant program would provide encouragement and support for local projects that would be difficult to design and operate, and would be costly initially. Federal

support could be channeled through the Special Projects authority, for maximum targeting. States could be urged to use Title III-type activities in the Consolidated Grants package, to manifest interest and guidance at their level, too.

Other studies have suggested that compensatory education programs under Title I might well be developed for disadvantaged students in secondary schools (Larson and Dittmann). We are not in a position to assess such plans, but if they are believed to be effective, such Title I projects might dovetail very nicely with Title III or Special Projects activities in the same high schools, with Title I attending to basic skill instruction as an undergirding for the other designs for individualization and dispersion.

Another area of federal capacity-building activity is staff development; the proposed reforms disclose at least one area where current federal policies are not moving to meet future needs. The federal teacher training programs were justified originally by the teacher shortage, but are withering in the face of the current surplus of teachers. The proposed reforms in secondary education call for a differently trained high school teacher. They would also place substantial new requirements on existing high school teachers and call for in-service training programs to impart new skills to old staff on an unheard-of scale. Current federal staff training programs, such as the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA), could be revamped to help with the task. At the least, capacity-building grants to school districts for high school reform should recognize and subsidize the extensive staff development and staff planning activities that will be required.

Research Priorities. Our litany of reservations and objections to the findings and recommendations of the reports clearly suggests more research needs than can be met in the immediate future. We will confine our suggestions to (1) research that would fill those gaps in knowledge that we found most serious, and (2) several specific developmental and experimental activities that are needed to allow specific proposed reforms to move forward.

The general research problem was suggested by our analysis in Section II. Theoretical and empirical work is needed to (1) describe

and define the several attributes of adulthood (job-holding, family formation, civic behavior, etc.) and (2) establish the relationship between these attributes and the many varieties of youth behavior, ranging from school performance to peer group activity to youth employment experiences. Better data are needed to distinguish genuine trends in these patterns of development from the characteristics inherent in adolescence and from the immediate or lingering impact of traumatic historical events. Specific research projects that are needed to improve the basis for future policies include:

- Inquiry into the nature of the transition of the majority of noncollege-bound youths from secondary schools to satisfactory adult employment.
- Studies specifically focused on the developmental patterns of adolescent women.
- Analysis of the impact of the reports' proposals for reform upon poor and minority youth.
- Further study of the organizational determinants of change in secondary schools.
- New studies focused upon the performance of high schools in the larger cities.
- Design and feasibility or simulation studies for specific experimental proposals:
  - -- educational drawing rights
  - -- comprehensive dispersion programs (several are described by Coleman and Martin) with individualized diagnosis and counselling.
  - -- job-placement programs in high schools.

  These experiments will be necessary to develop tested alternatives to the limited reforms that high school educators are likely to propose for capacity-building grants.
- A comprehensive descriptive survey of the American high school, to set forth its patterns of organization, instruction, social structure, and educational outcomes.

Finally, it should be recalled how little the reports (or this analysis) have reviewed the evidence to extract its implications for reforms in other institutions, such as colleges, universities, and

junior high schools, or to examine its contribution to understanding the causes and cures of rising rates of criminal and antisocial behavior among young persons in America. Such analysis should also begin.

CONCLUSION

The task of our analysis has been to carefully go through three national commission reports on youth and schooling. We have suggested that some of their findings are overdrawn or rest on a weak research base and that some proposed reforms may be less necessary or feasible than they think, or would have effects other than those intended. The task of reappraisal is a worthwhile and necessary preliminary to wise policy-making. But, the problem with repeated or prolonged reappraisals is that they can also lead to a complacent attitude that says "things are OK the way they are," to pessimism of the "nothing will work" variety, or to social scientism--"don't do it until you can prove that it will work."

We have a different attitude towards the three reports we have studied. The three national commissions were formed at a time when the nation's youth *were* a source of deep and growing concern to society; and the panel members--all experienced professionals and scholars--found so much that concerned them that they were willing to propose wide-ranging and often wrenching reforms in the institutions serving our youth. Some of the more provocative circumstances of the 1960s may have disappeared. Still, persons saying we should ignore the reports' basic recommendations for dispersion, individualization, and community participation in the preparation of youth for adulthood should provide some alternative justification for their own views of what is or ought to be, justification dealing explicitly with the range of theory and evidence that the reports themselves sought to review. We believe that the reports' basic suggestions should be tried by many different kinds of schools and communities, but with careful attention to the obstacles encountered and to safeguards against adverse consequences of the reforms to some students.

More careful field tests should be constructed for specific proposals that involve the creation of new institutions or the implementation of generally controversial schemes.

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